FALL OUT BOY PETE WENTZ: THE KERRANG! INTERVIEW / **A PERFECT CIRCLE** THE MAKING OF A **MASTERPIECE** / **GREEN DAY** THE MANY SIDES OF **BILLIE JOE**

KERRANG!

"THERE ARE TIMES I DON'T WANT TO BE RECOGNISED..."

AMY LEE

FACES DOWN HER PAST... BUT WHAT'S NEXT FOR EVANESCENCE?

+

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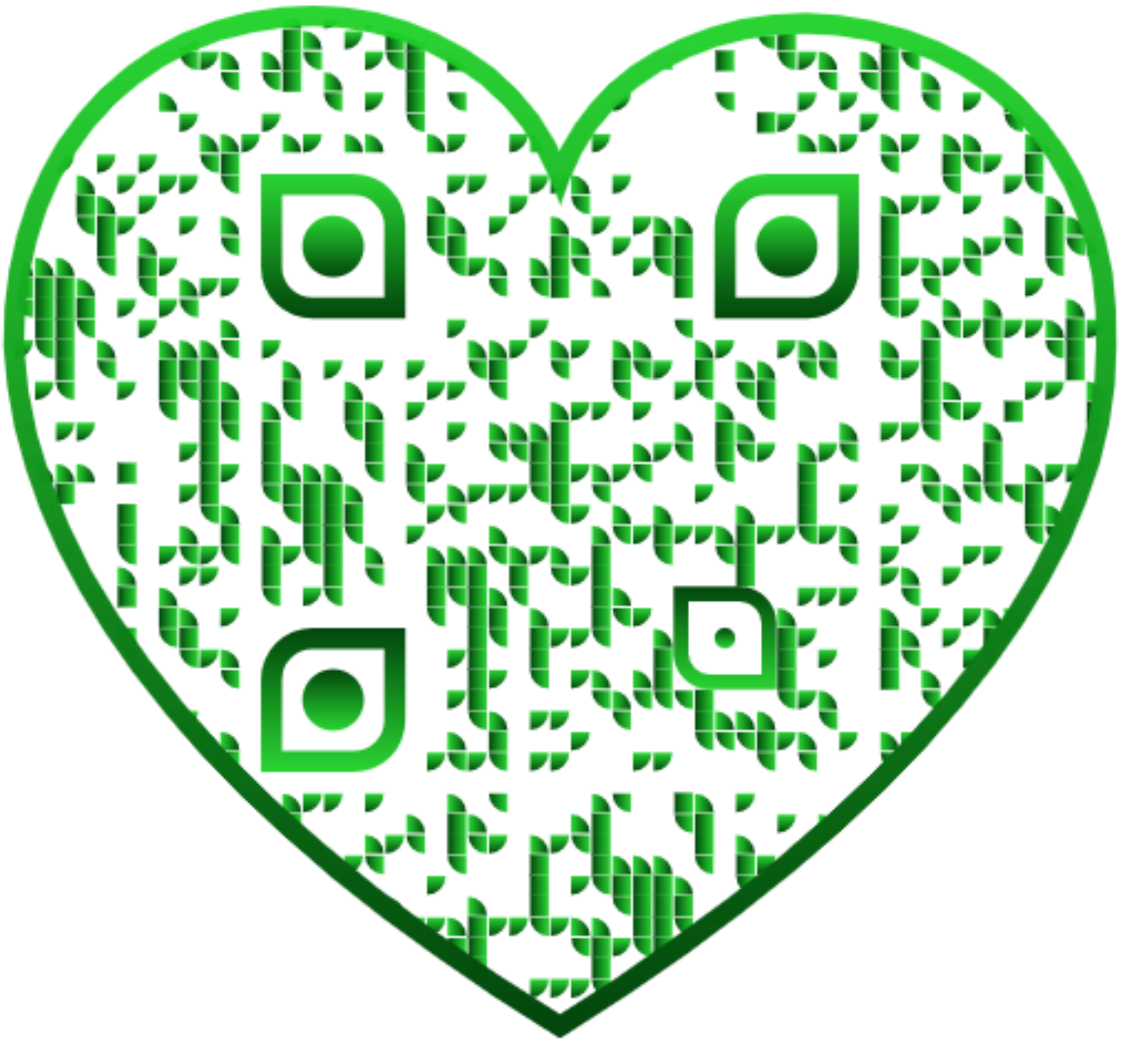

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WELCOME

ISSUE K!1717
APRIL 14, 2018

2018 is a year of many anniversaries for Amy Lee and Evanescence. It marks 20 years since their debut, self-titled EP introduced them to the world; 15 years (15!) since break-out album Fallen put them on top of it. And yet, Amy Lee isn't one to spend undue amounts of time looking back. Her focus, Evanescence fans will be thrilled to hear, is set on the present and the future; bringing last year's Synthesis album to life, and taking the time to figure out what's next. Amy may still be searching for answers to the questions that surround her next step, but as Ian Winwood finds in our world exclusive cover feature, Evanescence's future is not one to be concerned about. That story begins on page 24, and we're also thrilled to bring you a special Evanescence art print, created by artist Paul Brown, whose incredible visuals adorned the Synthesis album cover last year.

Enjoy the issue!

SAM COARE, EDITOR

EVANESCENCE AMY LEE FACES THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE IN OUR WORLD EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

THE GET UP KIDS THE EMO KINGS ARE BACK. NOW WITH ADDED TEARS

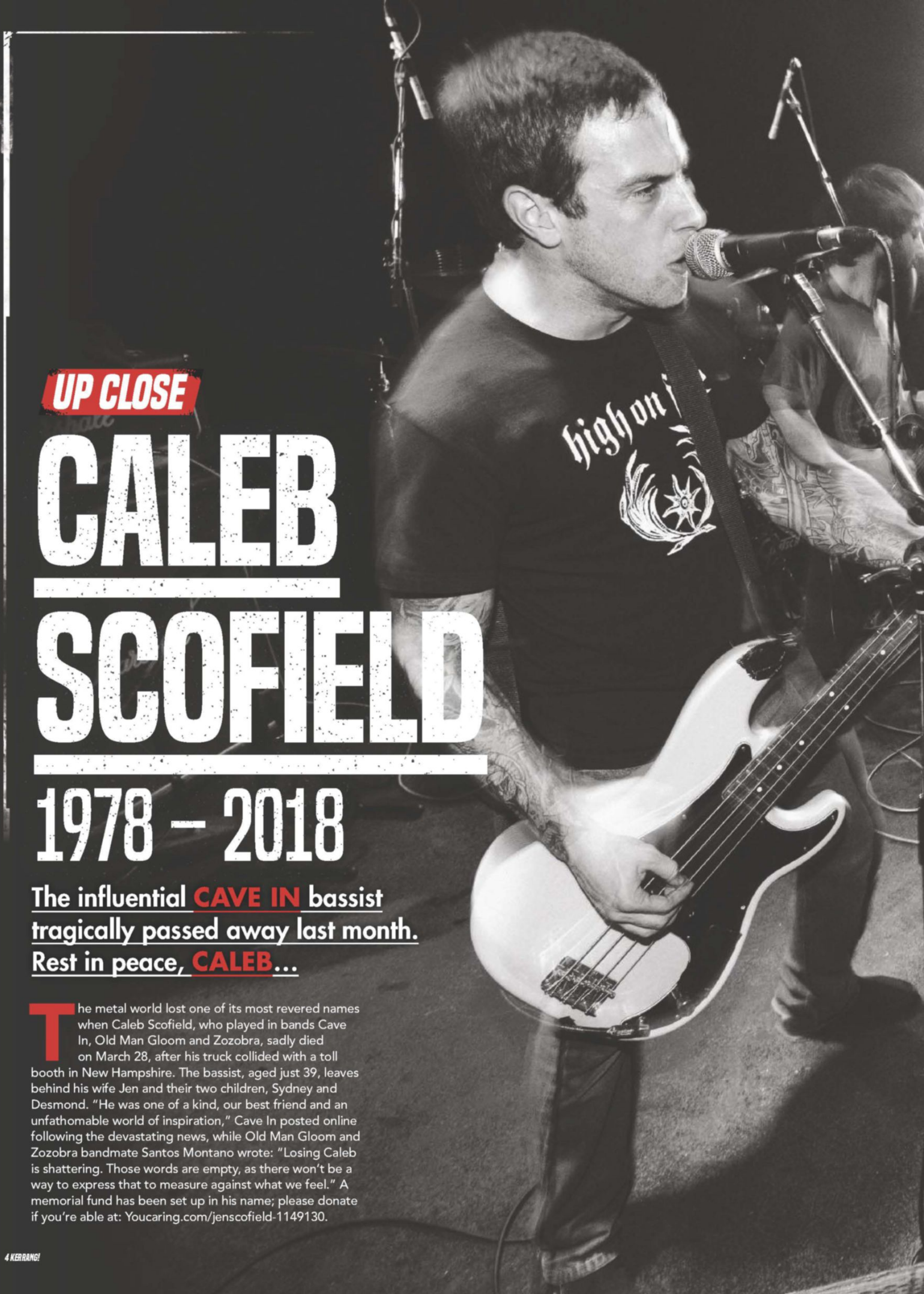
CREEPER THE SONGS THAT SPOOKED WILL GOULD'S LIFE

PETE WENTZ HOW MANY POP-CULTURE ANALOGIES CAN YOU SPOT?

BLACKGAZE THE INSIDE TRACK ON ONE OF METAL'S MOST TALKED-ABOUT SCENES

A PERFECT CIRCLE COUNT THOSE 'K'S, MAYNARD. COUNT THEM ALL...

FACT! MARILYN MANSON'S HISTORY OF TROUBLE-MAKING DATES BACK ALL THE WAY TO HIS SCHOOL DAYS, WHEN HE'D OFTEN GET COLLARED BY TEACHERS FOR SELLING SWEETS TO OTHER PUPILS



UP CLOSE

CALEB SCOFIELD

1978 – 2018

The influential CAVE IN bassist tragically passed away last month. Rest in peace, CALEB...

The metal world lost one of its most revered names when Caleb Scofield, who played in bands Cave In, Old Man Gloom and Zozobra, sadly died on March 28, after his truck collided with a toll booth in New Hampshire. The bassist, aged just 39, leaves behind his wife Jen and their two children, Sydney and Desmond. "He was one of a kind, our best friend and an unfathomable world of inspiration," Cave In posted online following the devastating news, while Old Man Gloom and Zozobra bandmate Santos Montano wrote: "Losing Caleb is shattering. Those words are empty, as there won't be a way to express that to measure against what we feel." A memorial fund has been set up in his name; please donate if you're able at: Youcaring.com/jenscofield-1149130.

PHOTO: CHRIS CASEY

The Get Up Kids performing at California's Bamboozle festival, 2009

THE BIG STORY

ALIVE & KICKING

Seven years on from 2011's There Are Rules, emo pioneers THE GET UP KIDS are back with a new EP, KICKER. And frontman MATT PRYOR can't wait to welcome in a new era of fans with its release...

For a man currently in the whirlwind of revealing The Get Up Kids' first new music in over half a decade, Matt Pryor cuts a disarmingly calm figure.

"My kids just had what we call 'spring break', so this week has been kind of a normal school and work week. I haven't been terribly busy," the frontman chuckles. "To be completely honest, that's one of my favourite things about getting to work with [new record labels] Polyvinyl and Big Scary Monsters: I know they can handle it. They just announce it and I'm like, 'Cool!'"

What he's referencing is, of course, the huge news that the Missouri emo heroes – completed by Jim Suptic (guitars/vocals), Rob Pope (bass), Ryan Pope (drums), and James Dewees (keys) – are releasing new music in the form a four-track EP: Kicker, due out on June 8. And while Matt's quick to stress that, despite the band's somewhat on-again/off-again past, the group have in fact been reunited for long enough that this doesn't count as a comeback. Nevertheless, he also understands what new music means to their fans. K! caught up with Matt to find out how it all came about in the first place, and why The Get Up Kids will never let their influential status dictate their decisions...

Hey, Matt! How's the reaction to the EP announcement been so far?

"It's all been pretty positive! I haven't seen anything negative, but I have seen the occasional, 'Hey, look at me, I'm funny on the internet,' snarky kind of stuff. And that's fine; it's to be expected. But for the most part, people seem to be pretty stoked on it – which I am too, so that's good."

How do you feel when people say the motivation for band reunions is money?

"There are two sides. I can give you my general philosophy, and that is: fuck them! I got into this *whole* thing with people when Jawbreaker played Riot Fest and I was like, 'Who *cares*? If they want to get paid then let them get paid!' It's so ridiculous. When we broke up [in 2005] and got back together [in 2008], everyone was like, 'Urgh, every band gets back together.' And I'm like, '*Yeah*! Every band *does* get back together. Unless somebody dies, bands do not break up.'"

What's the other side of it?

"Well, for The Get Up Kids, we don't need to put out new music to make money. We can keep playing the old songs and going away and coming back for seemingly who knows how long. But the fact is: we wanted to make new art. I don't know how to explain it, because you walk a fine line when you're talking about your own creativity where you can sound like an arrogant douchebag, but the stuff we were doing made me *excited*. So I was like, 'Let's pursue this.' People say, 'Oh, they got back together...' but we got back together *10 years ago*! We've been back together for as long as we were together before we broke up (*laughs*). We've been a band for 23 years, and we were broken up for three of those years."

> **"WE DON'T PUT OUT MUSIC TO MAKE MONEY; WE WANT TO MAKE NEW ART..."**
> MATT PRYOR

How did this 'comeback' begin? On your last album, 2011's There Are Rules, you'd started getting together as friends again after some time apart. Was it the same story this time around?

"Pretty much. When we got together, there wasn't an endgame. There's a studio that's, like, 20 minutes from my house in the middle of nowhere, so we were like, 'Let's just go and see what comes out of it.' We did that little by little, and eventually it was like, 'Okay, what is this?'"

At what point was it that you realised you would release new music, then?

"Maybe two years ago. The idea has been gestating, but this band is a scheduling nightmare because we're all so busy. Like, the fact that we even got promo photos taken is *amazing* (*laughs*)."

Did you approach the writing of the EP any differently than before?

"It wasn't intentional – it was just the way things happened. This band has always moved at a glacial pace, and we take our time with things. I think you're a liar if you're a professional musician and you say that nothing is calculated, but as far as the creative side and the actual songwriting, it's very natural and it feels comfortable. We've been doing this for 23 years, so when we're writing together, we have a shorthand that we communicate with, where it's like, 'You know that part where you do that thing that's like *booga-booga-doo-doo-doo*? Do that again!' There have been times over the years where we've not all been on the same page, but lately it seems to be pretty easy-going."

WORDS: EMILY CARTER PHOTO: GETTY

The Get Up Kids 2018: The Get Up Men?

Now you've had some time to process everything, how do you feel about the new Get Up Kids music?

"I really like it, I'm really proud of it. I feel more confident in it that people will like it. Sometimes we've done stuff and I've been like, 'Well, this is weird… it's *good*, but it's weird, and I don't know if people are going to get it.' But this one I'm like, 'This is *good*, and people are going to get it!' That makes me happy. I have to go through phases of not listening to it – because when we were mixing and mastering it and I had to listen to it all the time. And then we were trying to figure out video stuff and I'm like, 'Urgh!' (*laughs*). I've always felt good about it, but I just have to take breaks – like anything."

You've spoken before about how fans of the band can be quite possessive over your music, and they have a problem with you evolving. Was that a worry or a consideration for you this time?

"It's not something that I worry about, but it's something I'm aware of. No other person's opinion, other than my bandmates', is going to change my mind about what we do, but I understand. I'm a fan of music too, and sometimes I'm like, 'I only like the first couple of records' – and I *hate* it when I say that, because it's like shooting myself in the foot. But sometimes it's true! At the same time, though, it's like, 'Okay, if you don't dig it then you don't dig it. I don't care.' If you don't want to come to the show, then don't. But if you *do* come to the show and the only thing that you like is the old stuff, you'll hear those songs and you'll have a fuckin' blast, and then maybe you'll be like, 'Hey, I hadn't heard this new song before, this is pretty good.' I get it – we *all* get it and we're aware of it – and it doesn't change anything. We'd be lying to ourselves if we didn't understand."

Do you feel the same when bands say that they have been influenced by TGUK – does that affect your mindset?

"My feelings on that have evolved over the years. On the one hand, I've said in the past that I don't really care, but I don't think that that's entirely true. It doesn't change what we do, but it is high praise to have anybody to say that they're influenced by you. And so I appreciate and I'm grateful that people like what we've done – and hopefully will continue to do. I'm aware of it and I do care, but it doesn't change any part of the creative process. If someone gave you a compliment on the street, like, 'Oh, I really like that hat,' then you'd be like, 'That makes me feel nice…' but it's not like you'd exclusively wear that hat to impress that person."

Finally, then, is there anything left you hope to achieve with this EP?

"I would hope – and if it doesn't happen then I'm okay with that, because we're doing fine – to possibly reach people who may have not given us a chance through some of our creative misadventures, to hear this and be like, 'Oh okay, I get this…' I feel like sometimes, some of our records, people didn't like them when they were younger, and then they've come to like them when they've gotten older, and I think sometimes people have kind of written us off in their mind. So it'd be cool – but if it doesn't happen, then that's fine – to try to get their attention again, because I think that people will like this EP, and people will like the stuff we have coming in the future, too. It's going to be a busy year for us!" **K!**

THE GET UP KIDS' KICKER EP IS SET FOR RELEASE ON JUNE 8 VIA BIG SCARY MONSTERS. HEAR NEW SINGLE MAYBE NOW ON KERRANG.COM

BRACE FOR IMPACT

THE GET UP KIDS have influenced practically everyone. Especially this lot…

Fall Out Boy

Just how important are Missouri's finest to the Chicago pop-punks? "Fall Out Boy would not be a band if it were not for The Get Up Kids," bassist Pete Wentz admitted in 2005, going as far as to say: "There should be a How To Be A Pop-Punk Kid starter kit with bands like Get Up Kids." He definitely has a point.

blink-182

You think you love a band? Are you *such* a fan that they've even played a part in a romantic relationship? 1999 TGUK track I'll Catch You was actually on in the background when blink-182's Mark Hoppus proposed to his wife, Skye Everly. "We listened to it a lot when we first started dating," he revealed.

Coheed And Cambria

During the making of Coheed's brilliant In Keeping Secrets Of Silent Earth: 3, frontman Claudio Sanchez stated that the band were listening to TGUK's iconic Something To Write Home About LP a lot in the van. And it turned out to be a match made in heaven.

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TALKING LOUD

FESTIVALS NEED FRESH HEADLINERS

Younger bands must be given the chance to top major bills, BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE's MATT TUCK reckons...

"For the past couple of years, it seems like everyone is getting a bit bored with current festival headliners. When you see these massive bands that have been around for donkey's years and have sold millions of records – actual *legends* – it shouldn't be boring, it should be a moment.

"But it just seems that it's such a frequent occurrence now that any special moment isn't there; it's predictable, it's boring and stale, and they don't seem to be breaking any new ground, which is a shame. There are a lot of capable, younger bands that I think are totally ready to at least have a shot. It doesn't need to be for the whole festival, but it should be for at least one night of a three-day festival. Let them spread their wings – give them an opportunity.

"We've played these festivals many times beneath the headliner, and for some reason we still don't get the opportunity to do what we know we can do, so it's a little bit frustrating. Hopefully, there will be a point where things change. Nobody wants these legendary bands to become boring, but it just feels like it's going through the same routine year after year.

"We've done Wembley [Arena] a couple of times, and we had huge success in 2010 with Fever, and if there was a time when we should've been given a shot, it was then. We were one of the biggest bands there was – not just in the UK, but in the world. We took a bit of a hit on Temper Temper [2013], but it shouldn't change the band's history up until that point. It's kinda bullshit that we haven't been given opportunities when we dominated that genre for so long. The moment we got things wrong slightly, we just got forgotten about. It was a bit of a kick in the balls...

"The band that deserve to headline a festival, and that comes into my head first, is Bring Me The Horizon. What they've done and achieved from one album [That's The Spirit] in the past 24 months... they've gone stratospheric. There's no reason that they shouldn't have a shot in the next couple of years. They've done the O2 [Arena, in London] and that's the benchmark. If you can pack that venue out: game on, that is it." **K!**

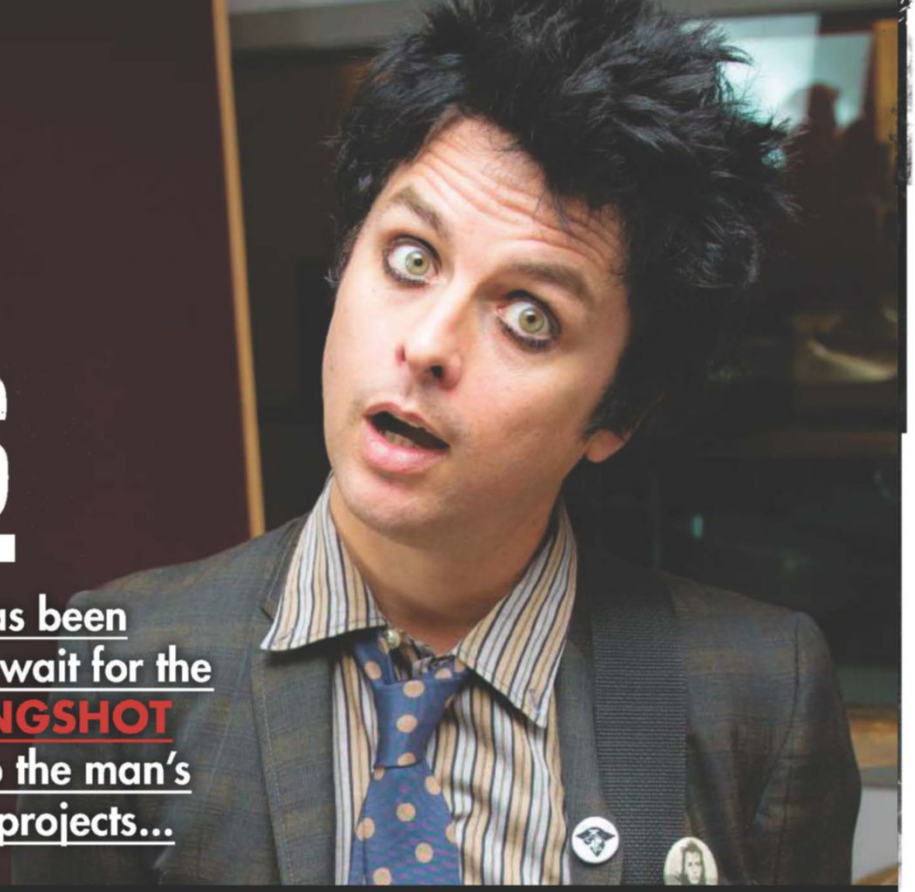
"LET YOUNGER BANDS SPREAD THEIR WINGS – GIVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY..."
MATT TUCK

BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE'S NEW ALBUM GRAVITY IS SET FOR RELEASE ON JUNE 29 VIA SEARCH & DESTROY/SPINEFARM. THE BAND PLAY DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL IN JUNE – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFO

WORDS: JAMES HINGLE

INSTANT EXPERT

CALLING THE SHOTS



BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG has been teasing a new band. While we wait for the grand reveal of what THE LONGSHOT is all about, we take a dive into the man's many other non-GREEN DAY projects...

PHOTO: GREG SCHNEIDER

1 THE COVERUPS

After a wild couple of years touring Revolution Radio, it's no surprise that Green Day have seemingly taken this year off. Well... sort of. Billie has still been getting his live fix in the form of local cover band shows (hence the name...) with GD bandmates and alumni. And from Iron Maiden to David Bowie, there's nothing he's not willing to tackle. How about something from Dookie, though? Please?

2 FOXBORO HOT TUBS

Not only do the Foxboro Hot Tubs have a lot in common with Green Day because, y'know, they mostly *are* Green Day, there's been an overlap with albums and live shows, too. While Foxboro's 2008 debut Stop Drop And Roll!!! is a brilliant record in its own right, it's essentially the predecessor to ¡Dos!, from Green Day's 2012 trilogy. Confusing, but great either way.

3 BILLIE JOE AND NORAH

Oh, how we scratched our heads when it was revealed that BJA was teaming up with jazz/pop singer-songwriter Norah Jones in 2013. But the duo's collection of Everly Brothers covers and reinterpretations on Foreverly turned out to be simply wonderful. And you know what? If The Longshot ends up being another folk-country venture, we're not even gonna complain.

4 THE NETWORK

While Green Day deny involvement in The Network, 2003's Money Money 2020 album (released via Billie Joe's own Adeline Records – hmm...) sounds unmistakably like BJA, albeit over new-wave tunes. After Green Day released American Idiot in 2004 and The Network were essentially forgotten, is now the time to resurrect this sound via The Longshot?

5 PINHEAD GUNPOWDER

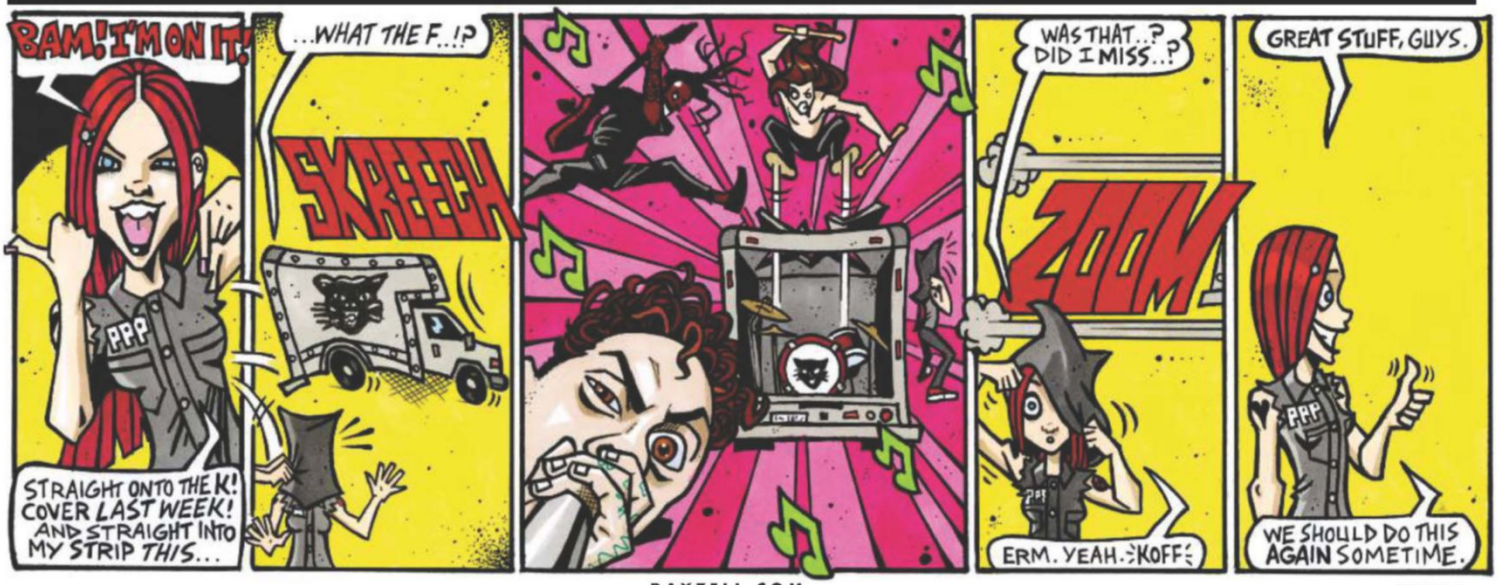
Billie Joe's longest-running, non-Green Day-based musical project, Pinhead Gunpowder have existed for almost as long as Billie's main band. And they're bloody great, too; 1997's Goodbye Ellston Avenue LP is Billie Joe at his punk-rock best. The Longshot are more than welcome to go down this alley, too. We don't mind.

6 THE LONGSHOT

Ultimately, there are endless avenues that The Longshot could take. But based on the band's private Instagram account and the only confirmed details that their album will be called Love Is For Losers, we can assume... absolutely nothing. Only that, if it's got Billie Joe's name attached, it'll rule. Yep.

KEEP YOUR EYES LOCKED ON KERRANG.COM FOR BREAKING NEWS ON THE LONGSHOT

PANDORA BY RAY ZELL



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ACCESS ALL AREAS

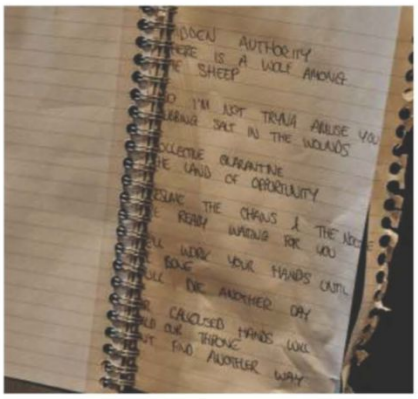
STATE OF MIND...

Second album syndrome? Pfffft. That's a non-existent concept in SHVPES' world. And with very good reason...

Griffin Dickinson has rarely been this confident. And rightly so, given that he's been meticulously chipping away at SHVPES' second record for well over a year now. "I set up my own little home studio and demoed the life out of every track," he explains. "Having that time to figure out my vocals and question the song structure helped to guarantee all the lyrics, phrasing and flows complemented the melody and, ultimately, the songs."

And while it's undoubtedly SHVPES' newfound assurance that will catapult them from scrappy youngsters to the UK's freshest metal band on album number two, Griffin is keen to stress producer Jim Pinder's importance, too. "He asked me how we wanted the album to sound before we went in," the frontman begins. "Trying to explain that to someone is like trying to describe a colour you've never seen, so I made him a playlist and did the best I could to articulate this new colour. Jim just understood it straight away. He's the sixth member of the band!"

This combination of relentlessly hard work and an in-tune producer means that Griffin's wish to "create an album greater than the last" will come true, then. Soon, the results will speak for themselves. ***K!***



PHOTOS: GRIFFIN DICKINSON, TOM RUSSELL

None of Cold Years could remember where they parked the car

AMPED UP

COLD YEARS

Blue-collar Brit-punks with a sound that's born to run...

Aberdeen is "a small town," according to Cold Years frontman Ross Gordon of his home city. "Your past tends to catch up with you here." The city's gritty granite textures and remoteness are worn into his band's sound, reflected in the title-track of new EP Northern Blue.

"It's cold. It's grey. It's puts us at a geographical disadvantage, in expensive travel and difficulty in linking up with other bands," Ross admits. "On Northern Blue, I make a lot of reference to monuments with nameless faces, those places that I've grown so used to."

On songs like Seasons and the excellent Miss You To Death, that bittersweet North Sea accentuation rings through. But it's wrapped around the sort of blue-collar backbone that would sound most at home on the United States' north-eastern seaboard. Comparisons to The Gaslight Anthem (a band Ross never actually name-drops, save for good-naturedly teasing "that band everyone says we sound like...") and Aberdeen's own prodigal sons The Xcerts (Murray Macleod is a friend) are flatteringly inevitable. But Ross gestures to influences further back.

> **"MY DAD GAVE ME A GUITAR AT FOUR YEARS OLD..."**
> ROSS GORDON

"I grew up with B.B. King, Rory Gallagher and Gary Moore," he says. "I've probably listened to Led Zeppelin IV more than any other record. My father gave me a guitar at four years old and told me to learn it. Now I'm trying to write the records missing from my collection."

Writing for an LP is already underway, and with the gig-counter already racking up, there's a hunger to really make their name. Headlining the Aberdeen Tunnels for Northern Blue's release show "felt like a turning point". And a stop-off at legendary Hamburg nightspot Astra Stube ("this grotty, graffitied hole-in-the-wall with a shitty sound system and a bar that you could smoke in") saw "80 or 90 per cent of its capacity" filled – proving the horizon is only as far as they push it.

"I don't know whether we're 'the UK's best-kept secret,'" Ross grins when asked about future hopes. "I do know that you're not a band if you don't get in the van, though." **K!**

COLD YEARS' EP NORTHERN BLUE IS OUT ON NOW VIA HOMEBOUND RECORDS

GET TO KNOW

Your quick guide to COLD YEARS

THEY ARE: Rising blue-collar Scot-punk force.
HEAR: Brilliant new third EP Northern Blue.
SEE: Watch romance unfold in an abandoned amusement park in the subtly haunting What I Lost video.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/coldyearsband

WORDS: SAM LAW

NOW HEAR THIS

ALEX BAKER gives us the hot tips in our guest-hosted new music round-up!

I've had quite the month, and not just because I spent an evening playing power ballads to Hugh Jackman and Steven Spielberg while DJing at a film awards ceremony. Get me. But the real excitement, as ever, has come from being bombarded by tons of killer music (I only really like Steven's movies because of the soundtracks, anyway – sorry, mate).

Mostly I've been smashing my headphones up with **Calligram**. This lot are like the soil being thrown upon the lid of your claustrophobic nightmares. They are that strange rush of dread you feel when you think someone is lurking behind you. They are a gnarlier version of the monster that lives under your bed from last year's John Lewis Christmas advert. You get my point: they are darkness, my old friend. Askesis, the latest record from this gang of black metal warlocks, landed with an ominous thud on my doormat a while back, and is still racking up plays on my show. Listen to it immediately, and get goosebumps.

Dragging you out of the grave and into a slightly different pit of despair is **Cory Wells**. He's a dude from California who stunned me with his tune End Of A Good Thing. He sounds a bit like City & Colour spliced with the English mannerisms of Frank Turner, but with an air of emotional distress about him that would make Gerard Way nod like a sage emo-wizard. Cory owns the acoustic side of the new wave of emo that bands like Moose Blood and Boston Manor have helped invigorate, so find him and soak in his musical misery (that's something you want to do, by the way). Oh, and – bonus tip – check out the band **Drawstring** while you're in that sort of vein, too. They're from Kent, and they emit similar vibes on their new Four EP.

Is it poor teaching? The digital age? Or a mission to out-cool each other? Whatever it is, messing with the letters in your band name is all the rage, with 'A's that look like 'V's (PVRIS, SHVPES) and a blatant disregard for appropriate vowel usage, perpetuated by bands like WSTR, VNDTA and **Super Whatevr**. In keeping with their name, the latter are somehow both urgent *and* lazy, with vocalist/songwriter Skyler McKee slurring his vocals through gritted teeth as he sings. Musically, they will not be easily pigeonholed, and every song on their latest album, Never Nothing, is distinct. One minute you will think they've been listening to nothing but Smashing Pumpkins, the next they sound like some turbo-charged indie-rock band. And then the next thing you know, the bombast of Muse and the genius of Weezer pours through. It is a ride and a half.

So, yeah, I've been bombarded by almost too much amazing music. But that's a very good thing! Until next time! **K!**

"SUPER WHATEVR ARE BOTH URGENT AND LAZY..."
ALEX BAKER

Calligram: Nightmarish

Drawstring: Waiting for the pool to fill up

Super Whatevr: Arch enemy of the spellcheck

LISTEN TO ALEX BAKER'S FRESH BLOOD SHOW ON KERRANG! RADIO, WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 10PM

PHOTOS: JOSHUA ATKINS PHOTOGRAPHY

KERRANG! ROCK CHART

Angry Brit metal crew SVALBARD debut at the top with a furious, righteous call to arms

SVALBARD: Awesome, and angry

	ARTIST	TITLE	
1	SVALBARD	REVENGE PORN	NEW
2	THE FEVER 333	MADE AN AMERICA	▼
3	JONATHAN DAVIS	EVERYONE	NEW
4	MIKE SHINODA	CROSSING A LINE	NEW
5	JUDAS PRIEST	FIREPOWER	▼
6	PARKWAY DRIVE	WISHING WELLS	▲
7	THIRTY SECONDS TO MARS	ONE TRACK MIND	▼
8	MØL	PENUMBRA	↔
9	STAND ATLANTIC	CHEMICALS	NEW
10	BURN THE PRIEST	INHERIT THE EARTH	▼
11	BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE	OVER IT	NEW
12	THE WONDER YEARS	SISTER CITIES	▲
13	FALL OUT BOY	CHURCH	▲
14	CARPENTER BRUT	BEWARE THE BEAST	▲
15	A PERFECT CIRCLE	TALKTALK	▼
16	CODE ORANGE	ONLY ONE WAY	▼
17	ROLO TOMASSI	THE HOLLOW HOUR	▼
18	GROUNDCULTURE	CONFESSIONS	NEW
19	MYLES KENNEDY	BLIND FAITH	▼
20	FOO FIGHTERS	THE LINE	▼

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LIFE IS HEAVY

BIRTH. SCHOOL. ROCK. DEATH.

A nostalgia-filled trip down the musical memory lane of CREEPER vocalist WILL GOULD. Warning: contains bangers...

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING

SUSPICIOUS MINDS
ELVIS PRESLEY (1968)

"My mum is a big Elvis fan and we used to do a lot of car trips with his music as the soundtrack. This one stands out for that epic midsection and it's had a lasting effect on me. I had a strong connection with it, even though as a child I had no idea what it was about."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF MY CHILDHOOD

CHANGES
DAVID BOWIE (1971)

"My parents' music tastes really rubbed off on me and I inherited a lot of my dad's records when he left, so this is really apt. I used to listen to it all the time, even if I didn't fully appreciate it until much later. It's alarming how that song from the '70s can still reach a kid all those years later. That's the magic and timelessness of the music."

THE SONG THAT SOUNDTRACKED MY FIRST LOVE

DRAIN THE BLOOD
THE DISTILLERS (2003)

"When I was with my first girlfriend we listened to [the album] Coral Fang a lot. Any time I hear those songs now it brings me right back and I think of that person instantly. I look back on it all very fondly, because I'm still friendly with her. So when this comes on, I remember being in her parents' house or queuing up for a gig in Portsmouth drinking cider."

THE FIRST SONG I LEARNED TO PLAY

I'M GOING HOME
RICHARD O'BRIEN (1975)

"I can't really play properly, but I write a lot of Creeper songs on piano. Well, actually it's an old keyboard I bought in Argos years ago. The guys in the band and I laugh about how bad I am, but I'm getting better. One of my biggest regrets in life is not doing music in school. I was too shy and insecure, but I loved musical theatre. So, when I was in my teens, I learned how to play this from The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Not very well, I might add."

THE SONG THAT'S (ALMOST) GOTTEN ME INTO TROUBLE

SUZANNE
CREEPER (2017)

"I lifted some lyrics – very much on purpose – for the second half from American Pie by Don McLean. I was on holiday and when I was away, no-one wanted to tell me that we didn't get clearance on the lines. Apparently Don McLean himself said it was fine, but the paperwork didn't go through in time. He was like, 'I don't even know who this band is, but just send me the money.' So I had to go into the studio to re-record one line on Boxing Day. The label couldn't risk not having it signed off."

THE SONG THAT INSPIRED ME TO BE IN A BAND

TOTALIMMORTAL
AFI (1999)

"My first musical love was glam rock and bands like Roxy Music and T. Rex, but as I got older I discovered punk rock and when I heard AFI I was blown away. It was the perfect combination of stuff I loved. I was never confident enough to start a band, but their energy and vibe came at the perfect time to inspire me."

THE SONG I CAN'T LISTEN TO ANY MORE

OLD MAN
RANDY NEWMAN (1972)

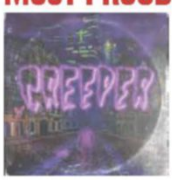
"This is a supremely sad song. When I first discovered it I was jetlagged from a trip to America, I was lying in bed with my girlfriend and I just remember crying. Randy is the master of the sad song. I think because he's such a part of our subconscious thanks to his association with Toy Story, when you hear him sound sad it's like, 'Oh my God...'"

THE SONG THAT PICKS ME UP WHEN I'M DOWN

BLUE CAROLINA
ALKALINE TRIO (2008)

"I'm actually a happy-go-lucky guy, so I tend to do it the other way around by listening to sad songs. But this is one of my favourites from a great record. It brings back so many happy memories, mostly of being young and drunk."

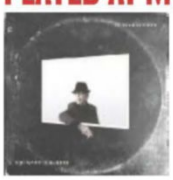
THE SONG THAT I'M MOST PROUD OF



DOWN BELOW
CREEPER (2017)

"This was a step in a direction we'd never been before. I feel like it was quite ambitious compared to where we started out. It was a challenge, but we were happy when we wrote it and we're proud of how it came out."

THE SONG I'D LIKE PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL



TREATY
LEONARD COHEN (2016)

"This has got some brilliant lyrics. I always associated Leonard Cohen with death even before his passing, which is pretty morbid. I guess it'll really capture the spirit of the occasion as people will be really sad. Unless I change my mind before I die and decide to put something happy on to cheer everyone up."

ETERNITY, IN YOUR ARMS IS AVAILABLE NOW VIA ROADRUNNER RECORDS. CREEPER PLAY SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL IN MAY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

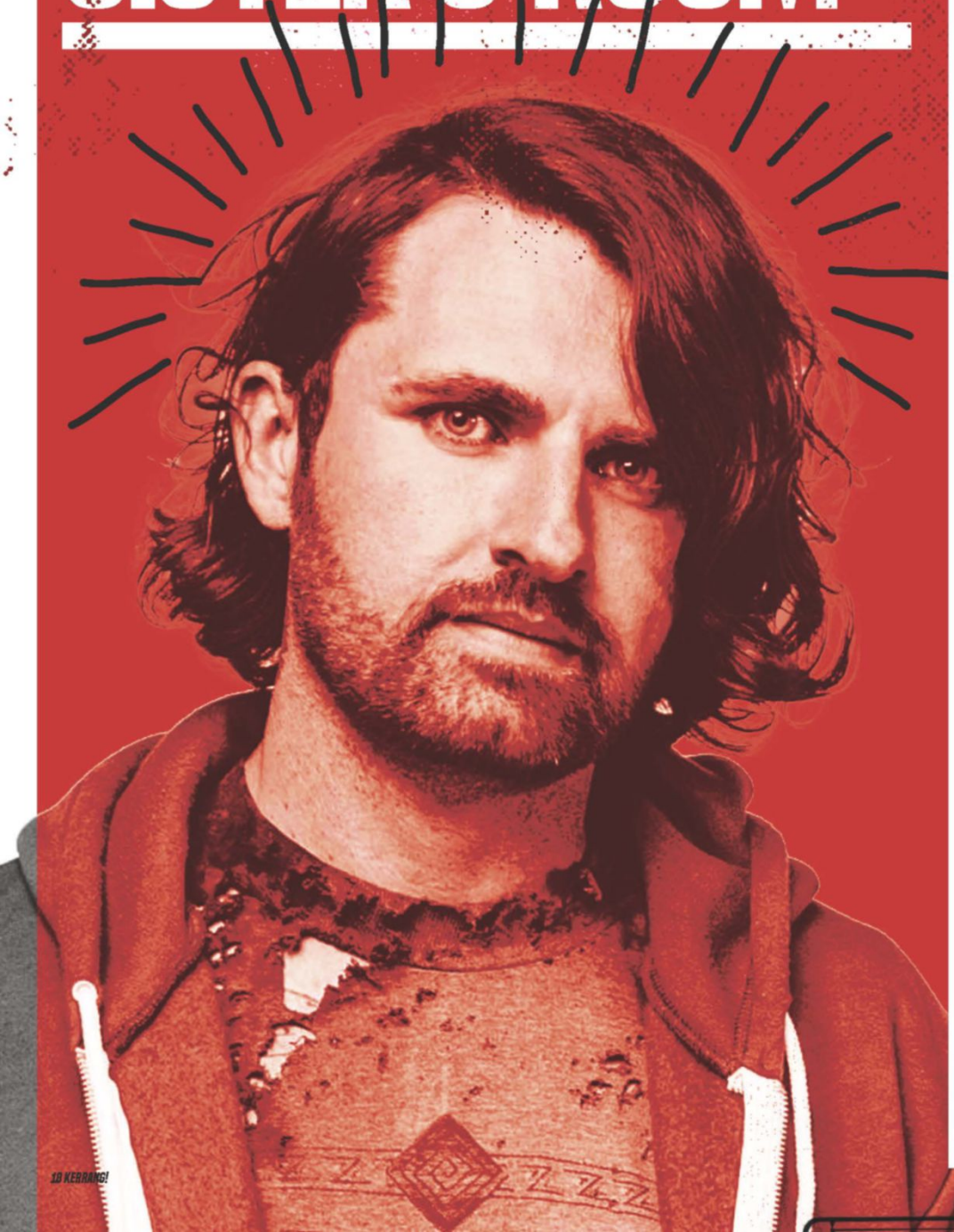
WORDS: DAVID MCLAUGHLIN PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

Yeah, whatever you say Will

NO-ONE KNOWS...

"MY DOG SHAT IN MY SISTER'S ROOM"

If there's one thing MIKE DUCE isn't, it's boring. Just be sure to avoid LTA's leading man around Portaloos, and you'll be safe...



I MADE A MEMBER OF BLACK VEIL BRIDES CRY

"I pushed a geezer from Black Veil Brides over in a Portaloo at Download one year. I said sorry afterwards, but he wasn't having it. He went in and I was shaking it, and everyone came over and was like, 'Who's in there?' and I was like, 'The Black Veil Brides geezer...' and they all dared me to knock it over. He was crying, I felt awful."

I WORKED ON THE LONDON UNDERGROUND

"I only did it for a couple of days but I got really violently ill; I had the flu, and I'm pretty sure it was the result of walking through the tube where the trains go. The geezer said to me that I had to go in or I'd lose my job. I was like, 'Mate, I can come in but I'll be puking and shitting all over the place.' They had really unsociable hours, too, so I'd start at 10pm and finish at 6am. That was a brutal job..."

I'M OBSESSED WITH SERIAL KILLER SHOWS

"I watch four episodes of Forensic Files a day. I watch them on public transport and on the tour bus, and some of them are *so* mental. They have actual crime scene photographs, and so you see people with their arms chopped off and shit. My girlfriend is worried that I've become too desensitised and I'm going to end up like that – which I'm not (*laughs*)."

I'VE EMBARRASSED MYSELF IN FRONT OF DAVE GROHL

"I've hung out with Mark Hoppus, Tom DeLonge and Travis Barker from blink-182, and we've toured with them a couple of times. But when I hung out with Dave Grohl it was *so* embarrassing... I was out of my nut and I was hanging off of him, and it was fucking awful (*laughs*)."

I HATE SIGNING SMELLY FESTIVAL SHOES

"I'm going to put this out there now: kids think they're being funny and random by saying, 'Sign my shoe!' and they put a stinking size 10 festival Converse on the table in front of me. But it ain't funny and bands don't enjoy doing it, so don't ask. It's like you can see the three cartoon stink lines coming out of the shoe."

MY MIDDLE NAME IS DAVID

"It was just a random one! I'm from a big Catholic family, so there's a lot of religious names, like Michael and David, within my family."

MY BIGGEST REGRET IN LIFE IS... NOTHING

"You know what, this is one rule in my life that I stick by: don't regret anything. You make mistakes, but you learn from it and then you move on. There's no point in regretting anything. There's nothing good that comes from that – regretting stuff is a negative thing."

LOWER THAN ATLANTIS ARE ON TOUR RIGHT NOW, AND AGAIN IN MAY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

WORDS: JAMES HINGLE PHOTO: ANDY FORD

Slam Dunk FESTIVAL 18

Good Charlotte

JIMMY EAT WORLD

PVRIS

FRANK CARTER & the rattlesnakes

TAKING BACK SUNDAY

SLEEPING WITH SIRENS

MOOSE BLOOD

STATE CHAMPS

TWIN ATLANTIC

REEL BIG FISH

CREEPER

EVERY TIME I DIE

As It Is

GOLDFINGER

THE SKINTS

FOUR YEAR STRONG

THURSDAY

ZEBRAHEAD

THE AUDITION

SET YOUR GOALS

NORTHLANE

KNUCKLE PUCK

COMEBACK KID

CROWN THE EMPIRE

CAPDOWN

SAVE FERRIS

KING PRAWN

COUNTERPARTS

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

CUTTERMOUTH

THE DANGEROUS SUMMER

ASTROIDBOYS

TRASH BOAT

ROAM

BRUTALITY WILL PREVAIL

BROADSIDE

CANT SWIM

WOES

LOATHE

TEMPLETONPEK

MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED

PALAYE ROYALE

CHAPEL

DREAM STATE

GRAYSCALE

HOLDING ABSENCE

SLEEP ON IT

STAND ATLANTIC

THE FAIM

NORTH
SATURDAY 26TH MAY
LEEDS - CITY CENTRE

SOUTH
SUNDAY 27TH MAY
HATFIELD PARK

MIDLANDS
MONDAY 28TH MAY
BIRMINGHAM - NEC

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COOL STUFF

MUST HAV£S

The only things you need to spend your money on this week...

Friends, it's time to embrace the springtime. Go for a bike ride, hug a tree, start wearing floral prints (like this crew neck from Hype).
£39.99 Justhype.co.uk

Think that your old fringe might have made it into Ed Templeton's superb exploration of counter-culture hairstyles? Think again.
$35 (£25) Deadbeatclubpress.com

The Wonder Years have marked the release of Sister Cities with this very good windbreaker and we're very pleased for everyone involved.
$49.99 (£35) Thewonderyears.myshopify.com

Here at Kerrang! we applaud when rock'n'roll and practicality combine, and that is why we salute this Marshall amp head keyring holder.
£34.14 Richtonemusic.co.uk

The best thing about these socks from HUF? Just look at what a great time those fluorescent skeletons are having.
£20 Size.co.uk

Palm Reader make killer hardcore and tote bags with dog skulls on them. Any questions?
£6.99 Wearepalmreader.bigcartel.com

This matte pomade from King Brown gives a natural, dry hold and is the answer to your hair prayers.
£15 Kingbrownpomade.com

Adidas have invented explosion-in-a-paint-factory chic with this crew neck. And, honestly, we are on board with it.
£110 Oipolloi.com

This limited collector's box dissects Slayer's skull-crunching final album into six gold 6.66" vinyl discs. Play each one six times over and summon a demon (maybe).
£46.99 Nuclearblaststore.co.uk

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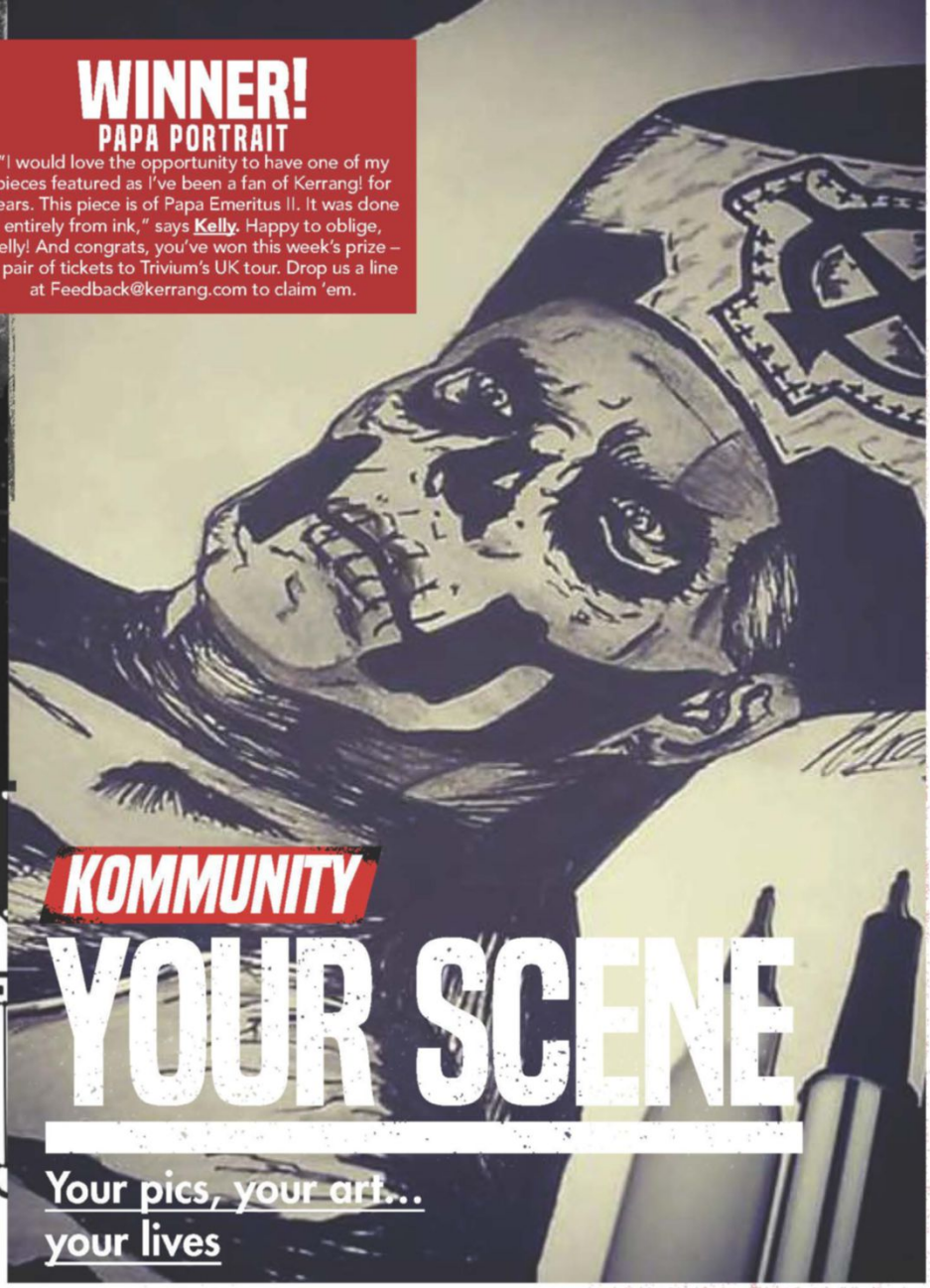
PAPA PORTRAIT

"I would love the opportunity to have one of my pieces featured as I've been a fan of Kerrang! for years. This piece is of Papa Emeritus II. It was done entirely from ink," says **Kelly**. Happy to oblige, Kelly! And congrats, you've won this week's prize – a pair of tickets to Trivium's UK tour. Drop us a line at Feedback@kerrang.com to claim 'em.



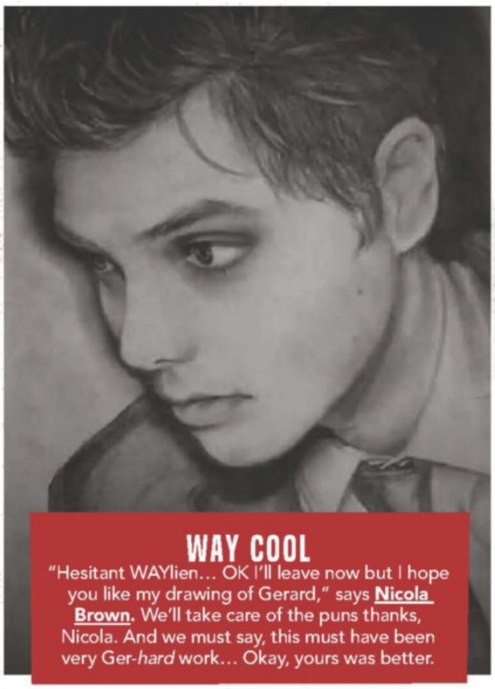
KOMMUNITY

YOUR SCENE

Your pics, your art... your lives

FITTING IN

"I met Doyle Wolfgang Von Frankenstein and Wolfman recently! I still can't get over the fact that I've met some of the coolest people in rock," explains **@CheekyWasp**. Nice! We really hope that you guys had a fringe off... whatever that is.



WAY COOL

"Hesitant WAYlien... OK I'll leave now but I hope you like my drawing of Gerard," says **Nicola Brown**. We'll take care of the puns thanks, Nicola. And we must say, this must have been very Ger-*hard* work... Okay, yours was better.

CULT FICTION

"When I met Creeper at their Southampton book signing," says **@ofmiceandlaur_**. Ace! We're going to bet all our worldly possessions that you found them in the murder mysteries section.

ROYALE MAIL

"Here's some of my best Palaye Royale-related art because I love them so much and I really need to see them again," says **@CheeseStello.** This is some truly excellent work. And, sure, the way you've drawn Remington's eyes might make them seem like they're following us around the room and piercing into our soul, but we're okay with that.

APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

"The cake I made last year for my 32-year-old (then) friend and huge fan of Guns N' Roses," says **@maxda99**. That is one hell of a cake. And you even iced a little cigarette for Slash. That's a level of detail we can only applaud.

TONIGHT PEOPLE

"I met Tonight Alive in Bristol, they were so lovely," says **@takeonthewxrld**. Awesome to hear. And you even out-haired Jenna. Quite the feat.

NEXT WEEK

WIN TICKETS TO SEE NICKELBACK

K! have teamed up with Nickelback to offer a pair of money-can't-buy tickets to the band's upcoming UK arena tour. The prize will include special side-stage access during the band's set. The Canadian rock heroes will be in the UK from May 3 in support of new record Feed The Machine. To be in with a chance of nabbing the tickets, we need you to tweet your coolest rockstar selfies and artwork with the hashtag #Kommunity, or email them over to Feedback@kerrang.com. For more information on the tour, visit Nickelback.com.

KERRANG!
MERCH

Instant Klassics!

As you can see, Lemmy was always a man of taste. Back in 1982, he modelled one of the first-ever Kerrang! T-shirts. Now we've reprinted this klassic shirt along with two others, celebrating the three stages of the world's greatest rock brand. Screen-printed on high-quality shirts, each 'T' costs £15 (UK) or £18 (overseas). Grab the shirt of your choice via Newsstand.co.uk/kerrang

All prices include postage and packing. Please allow 30 days for delivery, as each shirt is printed to a rather high standard. We thank you in advance.

COVER STORY

NOTES ON A LIFE

Fifteen years have passed since **EVANESCENCE** first introduced themselves to the world – and life for **AMY LEE** is today unrecognisable to the one she knew back then. As the band's **SYNTHESIS** tour blazes across the globe, in our world exclusive interview Kerrang! finds a vocalist reflecting on the past, focusing on the present, and considering a future that remains unwritten...

WORDS: IAN WINWOOD **PHOTOS:** PEROU

This summer will mark 11 years since London's Royal Festival Hall re-opened its doors to the public. Standing regally on the South Bank of the Thames, across the water from the Palace of Westminster, on June 16, 2007 a venue designed for classical rather than rock concerts came out of hibernation following a two-year £91 million refit with a headline appearance from, obviously, Motörhead. The occasion was the opening night of the week-long musical mash-up that is the annual Meltdown Festival. This summer, the event will be curated by The Cure's Robert Smith; in 2007, the man in charge was Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker.

On that Saturday night he introduces Ian 'Lemmy' Kilmister's trio with the words, "Please welcome one of the greatest bands in the world…"

Perhaps wondering why, while his band were appearing in one of the world's finest concert halls, down at the Camden Underworld an opera company was staging a production of Mozart's Così Fan Tutte, Lemmy himself seemed bemused by the environment. "We are Motörhead," he tells an audience of 2,500 people, "in the most unlikely of surroundings."

In the years that have elapsed between then and now, the number of concerts staged at the Royal Festival Hall by bands at home in Kerrang! has been vanishingly small. Despite this, when Amy Lee sits at the keys of a Steinway baby grand piano positioned at the centre of the Royal Festival Hall's spacious stage, she looks and sounds the part. Really, this isn't a surprise. As a child and an adolescent, the now 36-year-old songwriter, front-person and bandleader with Evanescence undertook classical piano lessons for nine years, as well as a spell studying music theory and composition at Middle Tennessee State University. In 2014, she released Aftermath, a soundtrack to the film War Story. Just last year, Evanescence unveiled Synthesis, their fourth studio album, a collection of mostly previously released songs reworked and re-recorded to include electronic soundscapes and orchestral arrangements.

From this adventurous start, a tour has blossomed. Following a caravan through the United States in the latter months of last year, in March Amy Lee brought her band – bassist Tim McCord, drummer Will Hunt, and guitarists Troy McLawhorn and Jen Majura – to Europe for a month's worth of performance with a 28-piece orchestra in venues from Sheffield to St. Petersburg.

Today is Good Friday, and this is a soundcheck at the Royal Festival Hall. It will take the band and the orchestra just four songs to get ready for tonight's sold-out performance, the first of two (a house-full appearance at the Hammersmith Apollo will follow in just over a week). As Amy sings the words '*as much as I'd like to feel like I belong here, I'm just as scared as you*', two dozen young and not-so-young fans file in through a door to the right of the stage and make their way to seats toward the front of the stalls for the privilege of watching soundcheck. As the song Lost In Paradise draws to a close, the gathering offers polite, self-conscious applause, for which Amy Lee gives thanks.

"When I had the idea to do shows like this, I knew we had to do it right," is her take on the tour in support of Synthesis. "I knew that it wouldn't be something that we could fake, just as I knew that it couldn't just be [Evanescence] playing the songs as they were originally recorded and then having an orchestra try to somehow find their way into that sound. So we've made space for them in the music. We've really pulled our sound back so they have the space in which to play. It's not just us playing our distorted guitars like we normally do."

Bloody knackering, this rock'n'roll lark

"THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I DON'T WANT TO BE RECOGNISED"
AMY LEE

Sitting in a small room on the third floor of the Royal Festival Hall's backstage area, Amy Lee admits that as you find her today she's a little bit sick of touring. The show goes on, as it must, but so too does the world outside of the bubble that is life on the road. Earlier this year Amy's younger brother, Robby, died at the age of 24; in a message on Facebook posted earlier this year, she described her sibling as being 'one of my best friends in life [and] one of my favourite people on earth.' Today this subject isn't broached as Amy, wearing a black dress with grey arms, lounges on a leather settee and pulls her legs up to her chest. An upright piano stands on the opposite side of the room.

She laughs at a memory of meeting Kerrang! for their debut cover appearance 15 years ago. Today Amy's life has changed to the degree that a space on the tour bus is reserved for one Jack Lion Hartzler, her three-year-old son. In little over a week, mother and child will return home to Brooklyn, New York, and resume a life of quiet normalcy that seems at least as much a part of Amy Lee's current identity as does the person who will stand onstage in front of thousands of people on London's South Bank this weekend.

"Obviously, I love doing this and obviously I love the connection my music has with people when it's played live," she says. "It's strong and it's undeniable. But as great as it is, after a while it can become draining and feel like a job and at that point I have to take some time away for myself and my family. That's just as important to me. It's important to be at home playing my piano. I don't get bothered in New York, so I can walk around and be the regular person that I am. I can go to the butcher's, to the grocer's, all that kind of stuff."

Do you do your own shopping?

"I do."

How much is a quart – roughly two pints – of milk?

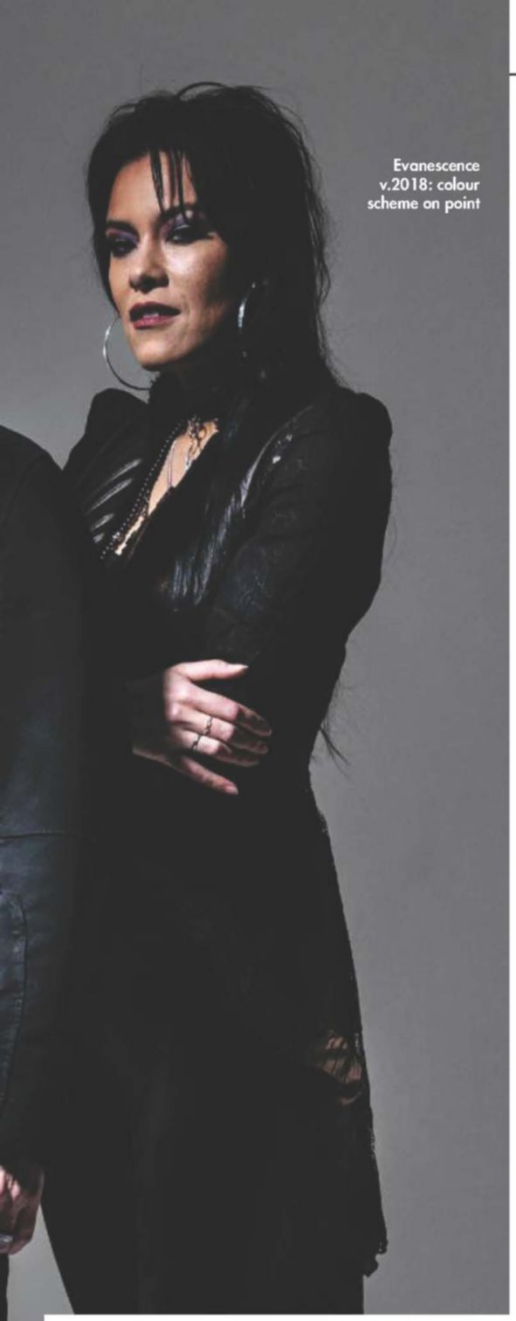
Amy Lee looks quietly alarmed. "A quart? I'm guessing – six bucks?"

Although few would recognise them as such, Evanescence are the last of the truly blockbusting American rock bands. When Wind-Up Records, then a subsidiary of the Universal Music Group, signed Amy Lee and her musical partner Ben Moody at the turn of the millennium, the music industry was flush with money to the extent that the pair were able to spend two years in 'development'. They moved from their homes in Little Rock, Arkansas, to Los Angeles, where Amy undertook acting and dancing classes as a means of combating her shyness. All the while, Evanescence's songwriting skills were honed and polished, so that by the time their debut album, Fallen, was released in 2003 it sounded as if it and the major leagues were made for each other. Bring Me To Life, its lead single, in particular could be heard on the radio more often than the traffic report. Come the final reckoning, Fallen had charmed its way into the homes of some 17 million listeners.

"The success of Fallen was overwhelmingly a blessing," says Amy, reflecting on past glories. "The money that came from it gave me the independence and freedom to pursue the music that I wanted to make next, and that has allowed me to have a long career. The positives undoubtedly outweigh the negatives. But there are also times when it has been a bit of an albatross… A lot of the songs on that album were written when I was 15 years old. And when they were released, straight away people

LIVE PHOTO: GETTY

Amy Lee,
London,
March 2018



Evanescence v.2018: colour scheme on point

thought that they knew me. I was the goth chick with the black eyeliner. I was the one wearing the corsets. And that image seemed to be set in stone. I won't lie, after a while I began to hate it. I found myself being suffocated by it. I found myself really wanting to go in the opposite direction and be someone else entirely. I wanted to say to people, 'You don't know me. This isn't who I am.'"

When you sing the songs from Fallen now, can you identify with the person that you were when you wrote them?

"Yes. Always."

Amy Lee extricated herself from the shadow cast by Fallen by adhering to the maxim that less is more. Ben Moody left the band due to that old favourite "creative differences" and from that point on the one remaining founding member has steered the band's course. Evanescence's second album, The Open Door, arrived in 2006, and duly sold five million copies. Following this, Amy declined to release any music under the band's name until the unveiling of an eponymously titled third album in 2011.

"I think there are a lot of big moments that I've missed because of my career," she says in response to her ever-longer absences from the public gaze. "We were invited to play the ceremony for the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo in 2011, and because of that I missed my grandpa's funeral. And obviously there are things like weddings and other funerals that I've missed. And as I get older I realise there are things that I don't want to miss. I want to be focused on the things that really matter in my life, like family. There are times when I want to be with my son, and take him to the playground. There are times when I don't want to be recognised."

> **"I NEED TIME TO RECHARGE, AND THEN I'LL KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS..."**
> AMY LEE

One of the problems with these understandable and even honourable aims is that, increasingly these absences have come at the expense of the music itself. Aside from two new tracks released as part of the Synthesis record, in the past 15 years Evanescence have released only three albums of new material. Amy herself is old enough to identify with the long-play format, and cites records such as Tori Amos' Boys For Pele, Smashing Pumpkins' Siamese Dream and anything by Björk as some of the pieces of art that inspired her to make her own music. Whenever Evanescence are preparing to record songs, its musicians convene at out-of-the-way retreats in Florida or California and practise the music they plan to release. But in 2018, there are no plans to do this. And while Amy bristles at the suggestion that she's perhaps falling out of love with the idea of music released in the form of an album, evidence to the contrary is mounting.

"When we make new music we can't just go in and bang out three chords and release it," she says. "I write music all the time at home, but the thing about that is that you don't want to do it to the point where it feels like work. It has to be something that I'm dying to do again because that's what makes it good. I've got to have that passion.

"But I do still believe in the idea of the album," she says. "That's how I listened to music when I was younger. And the success that came from Fallen I used to invest in the albums that followed so that I could progress and try different things. Each time I went over budget, and by hundreds of thousands of dollars. But things are different now; the numbers aren't the same" – in the United States, Synthesis has sold 'only' 30,000 copies – "and so the approach

The Synthesis live experience in full

BRING THIS TO LIFE

AMY LEE discusses how SYNTHESIS was translated from the studio to the stage

"I thought it'd be impossible to put together a tour where we'd play with an orchestra. I imagined that we'd have the orchestra travel with us on, like, six tour buses, and that it'd cost a fortune to put on. But the way it works is that the orchestras are put together in each city from individual musicians. They won't necessarily have played together before. That's not always the case – we did do a show in Sydney with an established orchestra. But normally the way it works is that they're given the sheet music and they learn the songs from that. That's how classically trained musicians play – they don't really rehearse. We just do a run-through of four songs each day to make sure it's clicking.

"That's all it is, really. It's weird because I get to meet all these different musicians, and I'm sure a lot of them don't know who I am. But I did meet a timpani player who told me that when he was growing up Evanescence was his favourite band, so that was kind of nice. He was good, too, which was a relief – you can always tell a timpani player who sticks out!"

to money is different. I go into something now basically hoping to do just a little bit better than breaking even. What I don't want to do is to go into it and lose money."

Can you say for sure that there'll be another new Evanescence album in the future?

"That's the plan," comes the reply.

That doesn't sound as certain as it might.

"That's the plan," Amy says again. "That's what we're planning on. The reason that I say it like that is because I don't have a timeline right now. I'm bad when it comes to planning ahead. I really need to not feel trapped, and at the end of every project I feel like I badly need a break. I just need to get to the point where I'm ready to really pour myself into the next project."

Should people be at all concerned for the future of the band?

"No, it's not that," she says. "We're on tour in Europe now and then in the summer we'll be back on tour in the U.S., so we are busy. Evanescence *is* active. But I've never been the kind of person that plans what's coming next when I'm in the middle of the thing that I'm doing at the moment. I need to have time to recharge, and then I'll know what the future holds."

Directly across the river from the Royal Festival Hall stands the Savoy, one of the grandest hotels in the city. It is here that Harvey Weinstein billeted himself while in London working on films such as Shakespeare In Love and Scandal. It is from within his suite on The Strand that he is alleged to have committed numerous breaches upon the persons of women alone in his company. As it so happens, just 100 yards or so west of the Savoy is the newest incarnation of New Scotland Yard, from where the Metropolitan Police are investigating the most serious allegations made against the now disgraced film producer.

The resulting #metoo and #timesup movements arrived like an ocean of disinfectant intended to clean a stable that had been in need of mucking out for many years. The momentum soon became a revolution that consumed politics, journalism and TV. With its history of sexual licence and testosterone, not to mention its 'groupie culture', it seemed obvious to all that the next column to fall would be that of rock music. Oddly, this has yet to happen. Still, as late as this year, Kim Deal of the Pixies described its culture and business model as being "misogynistic," and the ongoing relative paucity of front-of-house female rock performers does not reflect well on the scene. For her part, Amy Lee doesn't seem to wholly subscribe to this view. She points out that there are two women in Evanescence, and that it was a woman, Emily Lazar, who mastered Synthesis. She adds that a new mother, Susan Seiter, conducts the orchestra that plays with Evanescence each night. "I've got to work with more and more women as time has gone by," she says.

"It's hard to know where to start on [the #metoo subject] because I don't have a big giant story of my own to tell," she says. "I don't have some horrible thing that happened to me that I'm now keeping secret. But things do seem to have changed in my time and of course I'm very grateful for that. But that's not to say that I haven't had to fight my fights along the way."

Do you mean in the sense of people doing and saying things that you now see as being clearly inappropriate?

"No, no, no," she says, emphatically. "I think it's more along the lines of being treated like the silly little girl who doesn't know what's good for her and who needs to be told what to do by people who think they know better and who want to pat her on the head. But even when that happened, it's hard to tell whether it did so because I'm female or because I was young and people wanted to make money off me. And possibly it could be both, because those two things aren't mutually exclusive.

"But in the time that I've been making music, I have seen things change. I know that classic rock is seen as a male preserve, but there are so many subgenres now and there are lots of women working in those fields. I get to work with a lot of women in rock music now, and the reason that they're there is because they're at the top of their field. They deserve to be there."

The same, of course, can, and surely must, be said of Amy Lee. In the face of overwhelming, all-consuming and irrevocably life-changing success, in 2003 she admitted to this reporter that there were times when she felt like an overnight sensation. The implication of this is that it is unusual for an overnight sensation to survive to see the following day. But Amy *has* survived, and along with, say, Mike Shinoda is – regardless of gender – one of the few alumni from the class of the early 21st century who is still popular enough to grace the front page of a magazine. The decline of the album as the predominant barometer of success is hardly her fault, and she is not alone in viewing it today with a measure of indifference. But here in England – just as throughout mainland Europe, the United States, Australasia and Japan – people are still drawn to Amy Lee's flame. You can see it on the rapt faces of the few dozen people who have paid three figures to sit in the Royal Festival Hall to watch and listen as the band soundcheck. And you can see it in the fact that over three nights more than 10,000 people will flock to see Evanescence play in England's capital city and listen to songs that remain personal to both author and audience alike.

"I guess I see myself as being kind of a big sister," is Amy's response to the inevitable question as to whether after 15 years she sees herself as a role model. "In my family I'm the oldest of many siblings, so I've always been like the big sister to a bunch of awesome, creative, younger kids. And that relationship has shifted to the kind of relationship I have with our fans. I know that people look up to me, and I also know that that's something to take seriously. It was harder to do that when I was younger. When I was 21 I was making mistakes all of the time. And I'm sure I'm still making mistakes, but now I realise that there's something about the music that speaks to people and that's the important thing.

"I realise now that the music is far bigger than me." **K!**

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A LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF

AMY imparts wisdom to the person she was 15 years ago...

"What advice would I give to the Amy Lee that was about to release Fallen? I'd tell myself that the fights that you're going to have and the battles that you're going to go through will all be worth it because when they're done, and when they're won, you'll be the one still standing and you'll be the one who cares the most about what you're doing. I'd also tell myself to try not to worry because I'll be so much happier in my 30s than I was in my early 20s, but that I'll only reach this point through time and experience. There will come a point where I'm happier being me than I was back then.

"I'll tell myself it doesn't matter what people think, and that I'll realise that what I want for myself is important, even if at that time it seemed impossible. I'd tell myself that even when I feel insecure and afraid, and when everything seems like it's a big deal, there will come a point when I'm much more confident in who I am. I'll tell myself that I'll like what I've done and that I'll be able to look back on the music I've made and feel proud. I'd also tell myself that everything will be okay, and that I'm not crazy!"

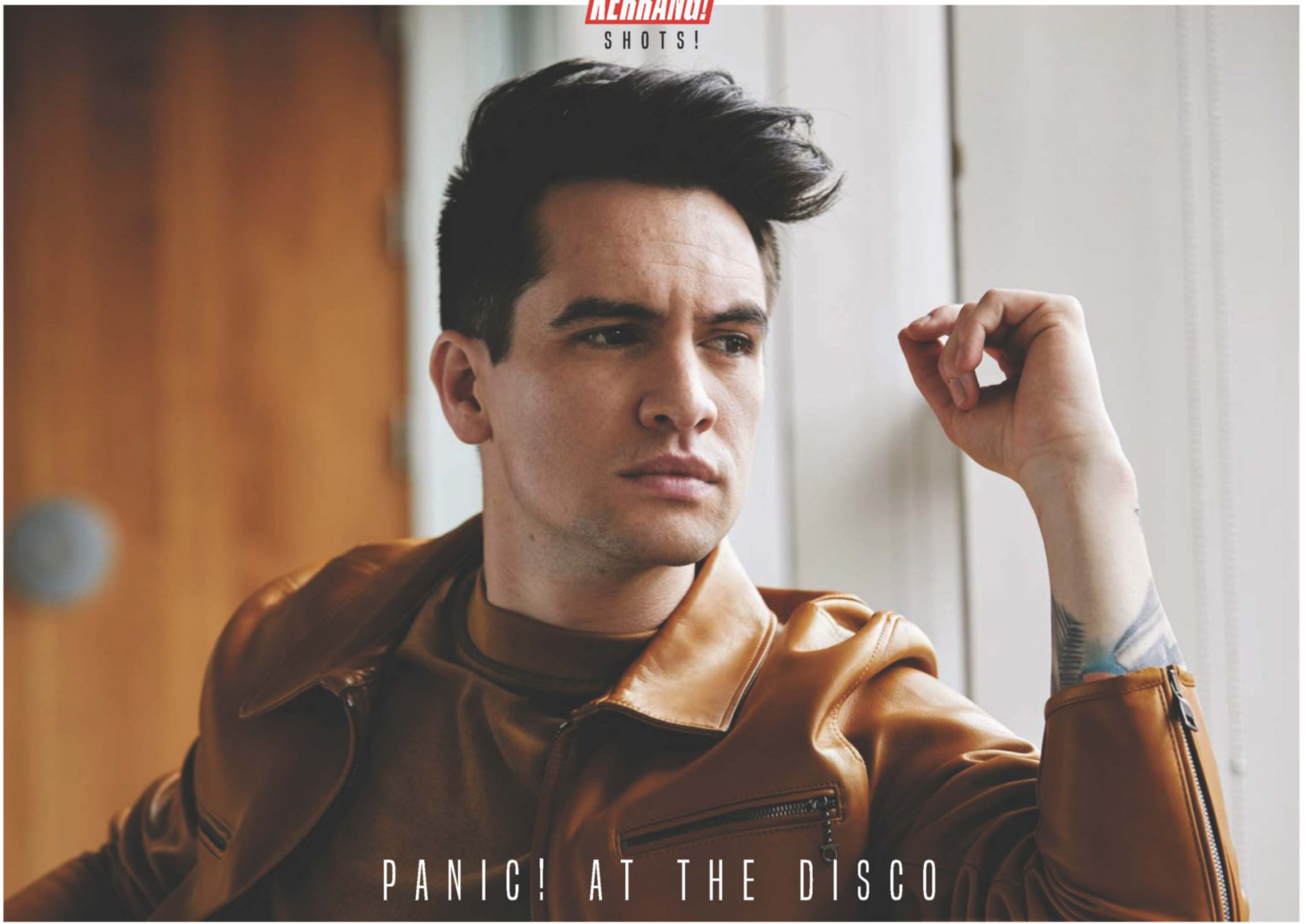
Fallen-era Amy heads for superstardom

LIVE PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

You wouldn't like Amy Lee when she's angry...

"I NOW REALISE THAT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE MUSIC THAT SPEAKS TO PEOPLE"

AMY LEE


PANIC! AT THE DISCO

AGAINST ME!

333

THE FEVER 333

PHOTO: DANIEL ROJAS

THE WONDER YEARS

PHOTO: ANDREW LIPOVSKY

ARCHITECTS

PHOTO: ED MASON

THE K! INTERVIEW

"MY FANTASY IS TO GO SOMEWHERE WHERE *no-one knows me,* AND JUST DISAPPEAR"

PETE WENTZ FALL OUT BOY

WORDS: JENNYFER J. WALKER **PHOTOS:** TOM PULLEN

Pete Wentz has come full circle. When we meet on a rainy Friday afternoon, at a swish Shoreditch hotel, it's the eve of Fall Out Boy's show at the O2 Arena. As he sits sipping coffee from a glass mug, wearing a fluffy brown jacket that makes him look like a stuffed toy, life is good. Really good.

Professionally, his band are back, and achieving things they didn't manage on their last go around, like headlining Reading & Leeds festival. This current run of UK shows have easily been their most accomplished yet, offering obscenely good production and an even greater appreciation of their new record M A N I A. Away from the band, Pete's a dad of two – Bronx and Saint – and has his first daughter due imminently.

Reverse that circle nine years to the month, however, when Fall Out Boy played the O2 Arena for the *first* time, and the bassist was in a very different place. Fourth album Folie À Deux – which was underperforming commercially – had not long come out, and eight years of being the poster boys of emo had left the band a wreck. Relationships had turned from being that of best mates to strictly bandmates, and Pete's fame (and marriage to popstar Ashlee Simpson) had begun to overshadow his day job. The Chicago quartet had two options: take a break or implode. Seven months later their hiatus was implemented.

The time off was tough for Pete, whose entire identity was wrapped up in the band, and things got tougher still when his marriage ended in divorce. He found

Fall Out *Bear*: Pete Wentz, London 2018

Pete, just sitting and thinking about stuff

THNKS FR TH FCTS

The essential info on all things PETE WENTZ...

BORN: June 5, 1979, Chicago, Illinois.
LIVES: Los Angeles, California.
EDUCATION: Started studying for a political science degree at DePaul University, Chicago, but dropped out to do Fall Out Boy.
BANDS: Fall Out Boy, Black Cards, Arma Angelus.
SPECIAL SKILLS: Writing lyrics, playing bass, running a record label, spotting talent, overthinking, making sports metaphors.
MOST LIKELY TO SAY: "I'm running five minutes late!"
LEAST LIKELY TO SAY: "I can't be arsed to work today..."
HE'S A LEGEND BECAUSE: He's masterminded and helped sustain the long-term success of one of the biggest bands in rock.

himself with no band, no relationship, and had to start again from scratch. *'I lived so much life, lived so much life, I think that God is gonna have to kill me twice',* Pete wrote on MAN I A single Young And Menace, and it sums his somewhat rollercoaster existence up pretty well. His have been an eventful and colourful 38 years…

Let's start with little Peter Lewis Kingston Wentz. What was his childhood like?

"Um, pretty normal I think… it was uneventful. We grew up in the suburbs where all John Hughes movies take place and they're just boring. The only thing that was a little weird is our family is mixed race, and it was a super-white neighbourhood, so it was like, 'Oh… I don't look like any of the people that I live near in this community.' But there was no great sadness to it. If anything, it made me be like, 'Well, I'm just who I am.' It gave me armour."

And what were you like as a kid?

"I don't know if I ever had an imagination as good as my kids have. I liked to hang out by myself. I just sat and thought about stuff. I think I was working [life] out in my head a lot. But I also grew up in a time that was perfect for my personality, with He-Man and all that stuff. I felt like that world was created for me, so I have fond memories of childhood."

What about as a teenager – did you have a rebellious phase?

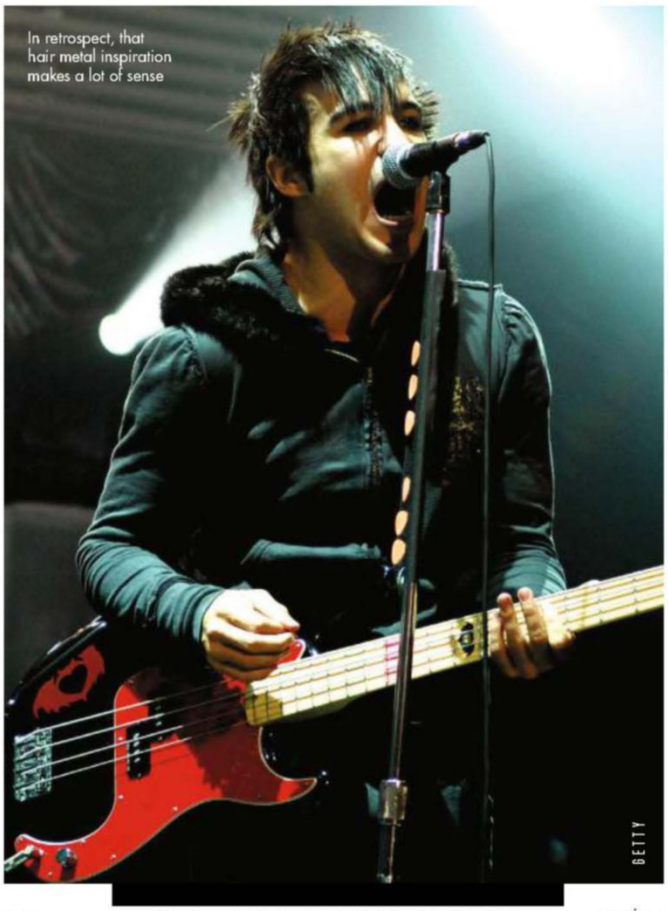
"Sure I did. But, like, diet rebellion; rebellion lite (*laughs*). I skateboarded and smoked cigarette butts. I missed a bunch of school and I ended up going to this boot camp [for wayward kids] and I got there and I was like, 'These people are all *fucking maniacs* and I'm not…' Then I got into punk rock and that's where you discover a community of like-minded people. There were times when I was too much for my parents. I had the volume turned up on my personality *all* the time. Looking back on it, that was a lot. Also they were thinking, 'Is my kid gonna end up in a band? Or is he gonna end up in the gutter?' There's no-one manning the launch tower saying, 'This is gonna be a success.' God bless my parents; my dad would come to all my punk rock band shows, in a tie. And I was super into graffiti at that age and my dad would walk around and look at graffiti and be like, 'Is that good graffiti?' Which is so weird because my dad doesn't know anything about graffiti."

Were they relieved when you went off to college to study political science?

"I think that was the only option I had as far as they were concerned. I was also the first kid. With the first kid you don't really know which way the water runs, so you try to keep them more on a path, whereas when you're one or two kids in, you're like, 'It's probably all gonna end up alright.' What was my career plan?! It's very funny that we could even say I had a career plan. I was like the guy in [1999 movie] Office Space who's just like, 'I wanna do *nothing*.' I went into political science because I had a history teacher in high school who was one of the only teachers I really liked – Mr. Randolf – and that's what he studied, so I was like, 'I'll do this, then I could end up a lawyer…' There was no good, airtight plan."

And in the end you dropped out of college to concentrate on the band…

"We were doing 40 hours of work on the band, and 40 hours at school and it was just not compatible. We looked at what the hair metal bands did, so we went out and pasted fliers – which was weird because nobody did it then, everyone was on MySpace. So my parents were like, 'You can have a year to do this…' and that year just expanded. I tried to go back [to studying]. I tried about five years ago, but it's hard to make yourself do it online."


In retrospect, that hair metal inspiration makes a lot of sense

GETTY

"INSIDE I'M, LIKE, THE MOST FRAGILE PERSON"

PETE WENTZ

The first time the band came over to the UK you weren't with them because you'd made a suicide attempt – which you wrote about on 7 Minutes In Heaven (Atavan Halen). How do you feel when you look back on that?

"I look back on it through the prism of Lil Peep [the American rapper who died of an accidental drug overdose last year, aged 21], and it's a different thing, because there was more drug addiction [with him], but it seems he had so much more to say… and I'm like, 'I don't know if people would have said that about me…' I just didn't ever think I'd be happy again, and then you just are one day. It's really scary to think about it. Because it was super traumatic for everybody involved… even thinking back on it, I block out – not the memories – but the feelings attached to the memories, because they're really painful. When I was going through all that stuff I wasn't hearing anybody. I would put a blanket over my head and I'd just be like, 'This will be what it's like when you're dead,' and I'd just lie there for half an hour. Mental health is super stigmatised, but it was even more stigmatised back then – less so than 50 years prior, but still pretty stigmatised. People didn't really talk about it. I have to say that everybody in my life was super helpful and understanding."

You also went through a public divorce. What did you learn about yourself from that?

"I learned everything about myself. I didn't just get a divorce, I got a divorce in the most public way you really can. So everybody knows *everything* about you, but all the wrong information. And then I didn't have a band. The band becomes your identity, so all of that was gone. In some ways it was great because I burnt the prairie. It was burnt to the ground and I just started over again and hung out with two-year-old Bronx all the time. Our relationship is *so* tight to this day because of that, and that just forces you to not only get up and go through the motions, but be the best version of yourself. It forces you to become an adult, because when I was in Fall Out Boy, if I wanted to do anything I just talked to the tour manager and then a car showed up. I didn't really interact with anyone besides my kid, so we would do everything, and I was like, 'This is how you go through the airport…' In some ways, it made me a more compassionate, empathetic person. The whole period made me realise that everybody has struggles, and it was kind of healing. I also didn't have an outlet to really go through it. I was doing that band Black Cards with Bebe [Rexha] but, but it was escapist music, so I was not tackling it head on."

What was the hardest thing about the Fall Out Boy hiatus?

"A big portion of why I do this thing is because I believe in it, so [the hardest thing was] not working on the thing you believe in. To me, it felt like the band was going to be forever, so that was a little bit hard. Actually, that was a lot hard; just thinking it was gone. In some ways it was good, because I was able to process what happened in the past eight years, which was hard to do when you're 'in it'. It was really strange, like, a weird time."

Was it a turning point in your life, perhaps?

"It was weird, because I got happy without the band and without any of that stuff, so there was a little bit of hesitation from me to do it again, because I felt at peace. Right before we put out My Songs Know What You Did In The Dark (Light Em Up) I was like, 'Maybe we just

shouldn't do this.' In the way this thing meant so much to so many people that if we come back and it doesn't mean something to them, do we scar that legacy? So I was super stressed about that. But it worked out. It's funny how life is; it works out differently than you expect."

You run your own record label, DCD2, and always seem to have a million projects on the go – does your mind ever switch off and take a break? It looks from the outside that the cogs are always spinning...

"No... it's always spinning and I need to spin it in the positive, or else I can go to the negative. I just overthink everything. I just think and think and think, and I don't really process out loud, so no-one knows. How do I quiet my mind? Meditation. That's helpful. Another one that's good for me is being with my kids because you gotta be present. If you're just doing [band/work stuff] you're not present – it's another version of being on your phone, and you're just doing it on the internal hard drive."

Where's your happy place?

"My parents have a cabin in Vermont, and there's no phone service, and it's just nature. I'm not even a nature person – I'm not a really big camper, but I like feeling disconnected and I feel like I'm at a different time there, it's just simpler. I like that. And I like hanging out with my kids, because they're just insane. The stuff they say and think is just so mind-boggling."

You're expecting your first daughter at the end of April. Do you think you'll approach parenthood differently with her than you did with your two boys?

"I feel like I can parent a boy on autopilot, from being one, but also from having two, I kinda feel like I know what to expect. But with a girl, I don't. My friends laugh because I literally haven't seen Frozen, and all my friends are like, 'Oh you will be seeing it...' The dad-daughter bond I see with my friends seems different and special. She's due end of April [while the band are on tour], so I will very much be trying to thread a needle (*laughs*)."

Looking back on your life and career so far, is there anything that you wish you had done differently?

"Um... there's stuff that I would do differently now, but I think that everything you do gets you to where you are. I think I would be a kinder, more patient person. I would also tell myself not to sweat the small stuff so much – I just think I used to worry about everything all the time, and I'm sure 15 years from now I'll be coming back and telling myself something else then too."

There's a line in M A N I A track Stay Frosty Royal Milk Tea that goes, *'The only thing that's ever stopping me is me'* – in what ways do you think that you hold yourself back?

"I have a lot of big ideas, but I don't execute them all well. It's a little bit frustrating. Either Kanye [West] or Patrick [Stump] said this, 'It's a bit like I'm standing in front of a canvas, with all this paint and no brush.' Sometimes I just can't do it, and when I describe what it is to people, sometimes it ends up right and sometimes it doesn't. I also think that my friends are sometimes like, 'He's too bold,' but inside I'm like the most fragile person of all time. So it's just weird... but I process it all on my own, in my head, so I think people don't always know."

Does that make you feel like you could just fall apart at any time?

"I read somewhere that everyone in the UK – I think – is two bad decisions away from being homeless. The message was 'have empathy for homeless people' because you don't know what's going to happen. So I think in that way maybe I could fall apart, but I think more so now, I feel fine being myself."

Does that sense of fragility make you hard to be around?

"I'm probably hard to be around in the same way that [Curb Your Enthusiasm creator/star] Larry David would be hard to be around. When I was watching Phantom Thread [movie about a fashion designer, starring Daniel Day-Lewis], there's a moment in it when he is having breakfast, and the person he's having breakfast with is buttering their toast and it's so loud, and I just see it grating on him, and I was like, 'I *relate* to that.' Also, any design that I don't like drives me *crazy*. I was putting Bronx to bed a month ago and I had to change his sheets because the little brother peed on the bed on purpose (*laughs*). So he had different colour sheets on and he was like, 'The blue is bothering me too much...' and I was like, 'We're definitely related,' because that's how I feel when I look at certain things. These things are definitely irrational."

"I'M HARD TO BE AROUND IN THE SAME WAY THAT LARRY DAVID IS"
PETE WENTZ

Finally, do you have a retirement plan, or do you think you will be onstage in your 70s?

"Jeez... I didn't even think I'd be onstage by the time I got to the age of 30! My fantasy is to go somewhere where no-one knows me, and just disappear. I would go to that place in Vermont, or a beach anywhere. The thing that's hard for me is that if there are kids, adults, whatever you wanna call 'em, who are like, 'I believe in this thing, it's helping me,' then it's hard for me to not just go, 'Okay then, let's just do it for another year...' I think the only way to not do that is to just *go*. Like, poof! Gone! How would I live out my days? I would really like to do something else eventually, and maybe not even something that I have a lot of skill at, like be a chef. And not a famous chef. Just a guy who works in a kitchen somewhere. There's a bit of normalcy in that kind of life that I definitely crave. I have plenty of friends that work in offices and they're like, 'You don't [want a normal job] really. The thing you have is better than that,' but there's definitely a part of me that craves that." ***K!***

M A N I A IS OUT NOW VIA ISLAND. FALL OUT BOY RETURN TO THE UK FOR READING & LEEDS FESTIVAL IN AUGUST – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR MORE INFO

Fall Out Boy 2008, at the height of their first flush of success and stardom

'Hey guys, pretend to *fall out* for us'

Patrick Stump: very concerned about Pete's Larry David quote

Pete there, ready to use his jacket as a makeshift superhero cloak

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SURRENDER TO BLACKNESS

A marriage of metal extremity and atmospheric dreaminess, BLACKGAZE is one of rock's most unlikely crossovers. ALCEST, DEAFHEAVEN and rising stars MØL explore its darkest corners…

WORDS: OLLY THOMAS **PHOTOS:** DIETER SKOVBO

In early 1990s Norway, a gang of young musicians emerged to continue the legacy of predecessors like Venom, Hellhammer and Bathory. Based mainly in Oslo and Bergen, their shared influences swiftly coalesced into a movement. Faces hidden behind corpsepaint, staring out at their audiences, they built sonic temples to Satan, forging a musical identity characterised by wintry brutality.

Meanwhile in Britain, a gang of young musicians emerged to continue the legacy of predecessors like Spacemen 3, Cocteau Twins and My Bloody Valentine. Based mainly in London and the Home Counties, their shared influences swiftly coalesced into a movement. Faces hidden behind long fringes, staring at their effects pedals, they built sonic cathedrals, forging a musical identity characterised by wintry beauty.

With hindsight, there are parallels between these two points in musical history. In 1993, however, nobody imagined what a collision of black metal and shoegaze might sound like.

And yet 25 years later, this very blend has become one of the most exciting developments in extreme music. Over time, people on both sides of the spectrum started inching closer to each other. As shoegaze morphed into post-rock, Mogwai took its shimmering, effects-laden sounds and ramped up the noise, fighting their way onto these pages. Opeth named their 1996 album Morningrise after an EP by shoegaze maestros Slowdive. Neurosis and Godspeed You! Black Emperor came from very different places to arrive at common, crescendo-laden ground. Justin Broadrick, once of Napalm Death and driving force behind industrial metal outfit Godflesh, founded his Jesu project, explicitly drawing on My Bloody Valentine and other shoegaze influences. And most pertinently, Wolves In The Throne Room emerged in the early 21st century with a sound that took black metal away from its Satanic origins, drawing on environmental concerns and embracing the crystalline feel of '80s arthouse label 4AD, in a way that only enhanced their majestic sweep.

The genre that became known as blackgaze really developed with the appearance of French band Alcest, whose debut album Souvenirs D'Un Autre Monde was released in 2007. Speaking about his

Møl: in full flight

Alcest: blackgaze progeniteurs par excellence

initial influences, founder Neige couldn't sound further away from black metal.

"I used to have visions about a place of indescribable beauty, and a state of consciousness that doesn't belong to anything we know down here," he explains. "To this day, I still don't know much about the nature of what I saw and felt. It could have been a memory from a previous life, or a different side of reality, beyond the limit of our usual senses. Alcest is about that place – its otherworldly beauty, but also my struggle to live with one foot in our world and the other foot in this other world."

Such a personal vision was never designed to spark a movement, but Alcest proved hugely influential, as an increasing number of bands transcended their blackened origins to pursue music of a nobler bearing. Ireland's Altar Of Plagues, East Anglia's Fen and An Autumn For Crippled Children from the Netherlands were all responsible for records that further fleshed out this emergent sound. It was, however, a band from the other side of the Atlantic who would help bring it to a wider audience.

It might be an exaggeration to describe 2013 as the year blackgaze broke, but only just. According to Metacritic, Deafheaven's Sunbather was the most critically acclaimed album of that year, garnering 92 per cent approval from its aggregated reviews. The San Francisco band had successfully located a sweet midpoint between pummelling metal and lush dreampop, attracting notice far beyond the usual gatekeepers of black metal. For a while, it looked like blackgaze was becoming the latest hip genre, a development that didn't exactly go down well in certain circles. Away from its reviews, reactions to Sunbather swiftly became polarised.

"The controversy was shocking," vocalist George Clarke told Kerrang! in 2015. "People seemed to have such strong opinions. The positive ones were just as crazy. Sometimes we'd see audience members crying or people saying Sunbather was the most beautiful thing they'd ever heard. I'm happy they believe that and don't discredit or hate it whatsoever, but it's just as baffling as the guy that's like, 'I hate you and want you to die.'"

While this tension between those seeking to expand black metal's parameters and those dedicated to defending its boundaries has never fully resolved, the last few years have seen no shortage of bands willing to brave the ire of internet trolls by infusing the genre with the atmospherics and sensitivity of shoegaze. Leading the new breed of dark-hearted heroes are rising Danish outfit Møl, with aims and ambitions that stretch beyond the noise.

Møl are not a band who'll easily be mistaken for Watain any time soon. With nary a dab of corpsepaint in sight, you'll find them rocking Swans and Sonic Youth T-shirts in place of cowls, leather and spikes. For these musicians, black metal is a flavour to contribute to the recipe, rather than a way of life.

"We come from different musical backgrounds," confirms vocalist Kim Song Sternkopf. "Nicolai (Busse Hansen), our guitarist and main songwriter, didn't get into metal until later because he grew up on shoegaze. I've played technical death metal and hardcore before. Fred (Lippert, guitarist) is into Godflesh and stuff like that, and Holger (Rumph-Frost), our bassist, used to play melodic death metal.

"Musical crossovers happen so much these days," he continues. "I think there will always be some diehard true black metallers out there that will feel, 'This isn't the way it's done, you've just borrowed this stuff.' I don't know if you have to pay respects in some way, because there's a whole community surrounding those typical genres, but if you try to accommodate everyone… well, you can't."

Like Wolves In The Throne Room before them, the influence of nature is of greater importance to Møl than writing paeans to the Dark Lord. "The name of our album Jord means earth, soil, and the elements," explains Kim. "Music sometimes conjures up vast landscapes, it widens your imagination. Both music and nature have this quality of conjuring up something otherworldly. You get to take a deeper breath, and take the whole thing in. The elements do have a huge place in the imagery I work with in my lyrics."

"IT'S AN EXPLORATION BETWEEN MELANCHOLY AND JUBILATION"
KIM SONG STERNKOPF

The recently released video for Bruma makes this connection explicit. As a piece of music, it's a perfect encapsulation of what Møl are all about. Opening with delicate, twinkly guitars before plunging into a thrilling barrage of blackened fury, points of beauty and optimism remain audible in the maelstrom. Visually, the video takes in the sea, snow and forest on its way to the sort of torch-lit cave in which you'd expect to find hooded ghouls.

"There are some heavy black metal tropes on there," agrees Kim. "There's a spiritual side, too. The images relate to how humans interact with nature, and I think that's something that resonates a lot with black metal."

Despite their different backgrounds, if there's one band Møl all find common ground on, it's Alcest. Like their French forefather Neige, they express emotions beyond the rage and depression that usually dominates heavy music.

"It's an exploration of the dynamic between melancholy and jubilation," says Kim of their focus. "It makes the music really energetic, and it's something you don't usually see in black metal. We have this focus on the major chords that in certain circles would count as blasphemy (*laughs*)! You can feel both uplifted and contemplative at the same time."

There's no doubt that blackgaze can reach people otherwise immune to blastbeats and heavy riffs. Deafheaven certainly proved that with Sunbather, while Alcest have been invited by Robert Smith to play at The Cure frontman's Meltdown festival at the Southbank Centre in London this June. On a line-up that includes shoegaze veterans My Bloody Valentine alongside Mogwai, Deftones and Nine Inch Nails, their appearance could hardly be better placed to attract more mainstream attention.

If Møl's debut UK dates in May will be a little less high profile, they'll be an excellent opportunity to catch this exciting band up close and personal. As well as enthusing about the bands they'll be playing with over here – Svalbard, Helpless and Monolithian – Kim is looking forward to checking our audiences out.

"I enjoy watching people when we play live," he says. "I see so much going on out there. Even when they're standing still with their closed eyes, I see so much activity in terms of what's happening in their thoughts and in their associations.

"The melodic aspects of our sound speak to a wider audience – people who really enjoy acts like Sigur Rós or the post-rock movement," he continues. "And at the same time, we get diehard black metallers who show up in battle vests. We like how this atmospheric dimension in our music can bring all these people together, even if just for a moment. That's what keeps me going, this instant where you can just lose yourself. You get to this place where, whatever you've done during the day, whatever troubles you have, you have a place that's your own – together with a lot of people (*laughs*)!"

The only apparent problem with blackgaze, then, is the fact that nobody who plays it actually seems to like the term.

"I am not comfortable with labels when talking about Alcest," says Neige. "Genre is unimportant. What matters is its essence: melodies, lyrics and emotions."

"If you summarise something with one word, and more and more bands are described as this genre, it puts you in a box in some way," reckons Kim.

Regardless, while geographically separated and inhabiting their own distinct worlds, these bands all share a sound and ethos. My Bloody Valentine and Slowdive shimmer and glide through their music as surely as Darkthrone and Emperor inform their aggressive sides. The melancholy and jubilation that Kim talks about make unexpectedly affecting bedfellows, and so do black metal and shoegaze. **K!**

MØL'S DEBUT ALBUM JORD IS OUT VIA HOLY ROAR ON APRIL 13. THEY SUPPORT SVALBARD IN THE UK IN MAY. MØL AND ALCEST PLAY ARCTANGENT FESTIVAL IN AUGUST – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFO

IAN COLLINS, GETTY

MELANCHOLY EMPERORS

If that has whet your appetite, this beginner's guide to the best blackgaze releases (so far) should get you up and running...

ALCEST

SOUVENIRS D'UN AUTRE MONDE (2007)

The 2005 EP Le Secret had begun Neige's journey into a previously unexplored world of blackened distortion and angelic melody, but his discovery of Slowdive inspired him to new depths of lushness, unwittingly kickstarting a new genre.

WOLVES IN THE THRONE ROOM

CELESTIAL LINEAGE (2011)

WITTR's Cascadian black metal laid the path for blackgaze, and with guest Jessika Kenney's choral vocals coming to the fore on tunes like Thuja Magus Imperium, this album brought an otherworldly twinkle into BM's deep, dark woods.

DEAFHEAVEN

SUNBATHER (2013)

The closest blackgaze has come to a Nevermind, this landmark album deserved every superlative that was flung its way as it ushered the wider world into its majestic ebb and flow. Trve kvlt pvrists may disagree, but that's their loss.

AN AUTUMN FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN

TRY NOT TO DESTROY EVERYTHING YOU LOVE (2013)

With post-hardcore added to the blackgaze party, this underrated lot from the Netherlands produced an underground classic with their fourth album. Gladioli artwork FTW.

MØL

JORD (2018)

Singer Kim reckons his band "play an introverted genre extrovertly," which sums up how Jord takes everything that makes blackgaze so alluring and delivers it with streamlined force, making for the genre's most instantly fist-pumping album to date.

Deafheaven: beauty and brutality

(OC)CULT STARS

UNDER THE SHADOWS

Sex, death and all things apocalyptic – GRAVE PLEASURES' deliciously gothic post-punk is a uniquely seductive brew. MAT McNERNEY takes us inside their heart of darkness…

WORDS: NICK RUSKELL **PHOTOS:** ANDY FORD

It's a shame we're not meeting Mat McNerney 24 hours earlier. On a cold Tuesday night, he sits opposite Kerrang! in a West London branch of Costa – anonymous among the urban sprawl in which hundreds of similarly faceless outlets sit – and notes what a strange evening he's having, compared to what else he's been up to.

"Just a few hours ago I was standing in a field, covered in blood, doing a ritual as part of the closing ceremony for the end of a studio session," he says with a smile. "I woke up and thought, 'Maybe I should make sure we cleaned that up, or the local farmer is going to walk by and call the police.' Now we're here in a café in London…"

For Mat, the café is the weird bit. As the main mind behind Grave Pleasures – as well as psych-folk outfit Hexvessel, with whom the blood ritual was performed – his musical output is that of a person who doesn't quite fit in with the norm. Atop the post-punk riffs and dark, seedy goth atmospherics of the band's latest album, the excellent Motherblood, Mat paints a lyrical picture of a supremely personal world: one of nuclear war, shagging, death, life, the occult, darkness, blinding light, seriousness and humour. All of it is drawn from a very real well of experience, of living a life of one's own, rejecting and shedding certain aspects of 21st century existence, searching for true meaning. He sips his hot chocolate.

"For me, it doesn't seem like a bizarre way of living," he chuckles. "It's healthy for me in that sense."

Mat's journey to the dark side began as a teenager, when the world of the strict

Mat McNerney: not impressed by your bullshit

Next time just pay extra for the squeezy ketchup bottle lads

Catholic school he attended collided with the metal underground he was becoming increasingly drawn towards. Having discovered bands like Siouxsie And The Banshees and The Cure through his older sisters, the more extreme sounds of Slayer, Morbid Angel and Darkthrone followed. Though the school generally frowned on metal, there was also opportunity to play music.

"I was in a death metal band called Vomitorium, and we played at the youth club where they'd put bands on," beams Mat. But despite the school's tough rules and objection to metal, their show did not quite have the desired effect. "I remember one priest came and saw it and was like, 'I *really* liked it!' We had to have a band meeting because we were like, 'The priest liked us. That's not good!'"

If said priest liked the music, however, they definitely disapproved of some of the other subjects in which Mat and his friends were taking an interest. Having discovered Morbid Angel's logo scrawled on one of their exercise books, they were called into a meeting by one priest who told them, "Boys, I'm worried about this."

"It was all part of that stuff that wasn't allowed, or you weren't allowed to talk about," Mat recalls. "Someone would have a copy of The Satanic Bible, and you'd have to stow it in your bag. I'd bring inverted crosses home and hide them in my room, but my mum would always find them and throw them away. So we'd have to hide them in bushes down the street so we could put them on before we'd go out."

Eventually, Mat moved from London to Norway, first to Oslo, and then in the far North, Karasjok in Lapland, not far from the Finnish border. He began working with established Norwegian black metal bands like Dødheimsgard, as well as his own band, Code. But after he left the former and the latter were doing nothing, it was in Finland in 2010 that the seeds for Grave Pleasures were sown, albeit under a different name: Beastmilk. Once again, the occult raised its head.

"I met [guitarist] Johan Snell, who was a friend of my wife's. We started talking about Finnish post-punk, and saying, 'Oh, wouldn't it be cool to mix this in with some of the black metal stuff we've been doing?' I remember there were a lot of names around like BlackMilk, which was a clothing brand, but we got Beastmilk because we had been reading White Stains by [infamous occultist] Aleister Crowley. We were talking about this occult aspect of milk – everyone talks about blood, but milk is much more mysterious."

Sadly, Beastmilk was spilt not long after the band's superb Climax debut, with Johan leaving, prompting the name change to Grave Pleasures. "It's a name that's supposed to be taken like, *serious* pleasures," laughs Mat. The name and line-up may have changed, but the band's – and Mat's – spirit remained on the same path, continuing through 2015's Dreamcrash album, and blossoming on last year's Motherblood.

"It's a pure free-for-all, with no regulations," he explains. "I really enjoy the idea that your backstage is its own country with no laws and no government. You can do what you want, say whatever you like and nobody is going to judge you. I like that aspect of things: embracing the chaos and letting it in."

"IF YOU DIG INTO THE DARKNESS, WHAT YOU'LL FIND IS LIGHT"

MAT McNERNEY

Mat admits that this lifestyle and being able to make a living off his various artistic endeavours is "a constant struggle". But it is also highly liberating, and something that is fundamental to his life now, far beyond the limitations of being a rockstar.

"I think through the music I discovered a way of living spiritually that makes sense for me," he explains. "I feel like it enriches my life, which is really, really important to me. Moving to Finland was the ultimate break to get rid of the past and start afresh. I realised that the occult isn't this sort of dark, secret thing. There's a lot to be learned from it that was hidden from me before, [as though I wasn't] allowed to be interested in it because of my Christian upbringing. I think it's really helped with the music as well, to be involved in that side of things and have it as part of my life."

An example: the Hindu goddess Kali graces the sleeve of Motherblood. Not as a bit of weekend-hippie, went-to-India-once fluff, but as a symbol of everything Mat is talking about lyrically: devastation, life, death, the threat of extinction. And more besides.

"We have really upset the balance with what's happening in the world, and especially with women and the role of women in the modern world," he explains. "We're having all these discussions about women and equality now, and I thought, 'Well, yeah. We've upset the balance and we should venerate Kali more in the Western world.' Kali is the ultimate goddess of life and death, and it's through her you get your understanding of those two aspects, the balance."

And therein lies the fundament of Grave Pleasures' expression. As Mat sings on Joy Through Death, *'Death is the meaning of life.'* But that simply means that life should be lived in as joyous a manner as possible while you still can. Even the threat of nuclear war – a theme so prevalent in his songs – can provide an impetus for happiness.

"It was mind-blowing as a kid that we had to think about these things," he says with a dark chuckle. "There was the nuclear standoff with Russia, and living in London, you were under threat from the IRA at all times. Now the danger has changed, but it's the same kind of danger. And you live with that always – the thrill of death. It's interesting that as a species we don't really discuss it. We do the same thing that we do with sex: it's all behind closed doors. So the idea with Grave Pleasures is to open this discussion up and say, 'It is sexy, it is enjoyable and it's a thrill. It's there, it's within us.' If we really recognised how destructive we are as a species and celebrated it as part of ourselves, then maybe we wouldn't be doing it."

Mat and Grave Pleasures are a man and a band you could pore over at length. Because what he expresses is a life philosophy, and a death philosophy that everyone can identify with. And you may not wrap up the recording of an album covered in blood, or feel the need to move to Scandinavia to shed the skin of the past, but nobody can disagree with it: Have a good time, all of the time. You know who said that? Spinal Tap. And cracking a smile is just what Mat wants.

"Laughing Abyss is a good song title about that, because no matter how deep the abyss is, there's always some laughter there," he says in closing. "And that's really what's there if you go down to the deepest abyss. That's sort of the message: if you dig into the darkness, what you're going to find is light." ***K!***

GRAVE PLEASURES' ALBUM MOTHERBLOOD IS OUT NOW VIA CENTURY MEDIA. THE BAND TOUR THE UK WITH CONVERGE THIS MONTH – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFO

DIGGING THE GRAVE

MAT McNERNEY explains the mutual love-in his band and CONVERGE share...

"We became friendly with the guys from Converge a while back now. Nate [Newton, bass] bought our Beastmilk stuff, and I saw his name and was like, 'Fuck! Guys, we'll send it to him for free.' So I got in touch and he invited us to a gig where we met Kurt [Ballou, guitar], who invited us over to record with him.

"We're all music nerds who connect on old New York and American stuff like Insanity and Dead Kennedys. There are a lot of common sources between us, but they went in a hardcore direction and we went more towards black metal. That's mainly to do with geography and what was relevant to each of us as kids, but it's basically the same stuff that we all grew up on. We felt a connection immediately and I think they did too.

"Going to a Converge gig in Finland was great because there were all kinds of people there, and that's what I see at Grave Pleasures gigs too. We're lucky to be able to play with them. I think by the end of the summer the tours we do with this band will be quite different, perception-wise."

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REVIEWS

KKKKK = CLASSIC KKKK = EXCELLENT KKK = GOOD KK = AVERAGE K = POOR

The gents' spring collection at Debenhams is nice this year

SIMPLY 'PHANTASTIC

Maynard James Keenan-fronted supergroup A PERFECT CIRCLE return to set the world to rights on beautifully-crafted third album

A PERFECT CIRCLE
EAT THE ELEPHANT
(BMG)

KKKKK

If you want to stump an A Perfect Circle fan, ask them which of the band's first two albums they prefer: 2000's Mer De Noms debut, or its 2003 follow-up, Thirteenth Step. Such is the towering majesty and superb artistry of both records, it turns a simple either-or question into an agonising choice. Both are brilliant, and both very much stand on their own merit, with their own personality. The bad news for those that have long struggled with this quandary is that Eat The Elephant, the first studio release since 2004's politically focused covers collection eMOTIVe, has made the 'Best APC album' debate a three-horse race.

Not as romantic as their debut album, or as dynamic as the second, third album proper Eat The Elephant instead comes swathed in a captivating coat embroidered by growth and maturation that doesn't unbutton easily. Just look at the songs released so far. The Doomed, though powered by grand spaghetti western drums that give a clue to its origins as a piece of soundtrack work by guitarist and band mastermind Billy Howerdel, constantly pulls back from its own bombast. So does Disillusioned, thanks to a melody that melts into starkness under the heat of its own intensity. They're slow burns, though, with only TalkTalk, all airy keys and a classic cryptic Maynard James Keenan lyric ('*Like cake in a crisis*') sounding like it might have been cryogenically frozen for the past 14 years. Which, incidentally, the singer has jokingly been suggesting Billy was.

Speaking to K! recently, Maynard discussed his tenure specialising in the layout of pet shops, specifically his idea of having frequently bought items, such as dog food, stored at the back, to make customers walk past other less viewed products on the way to fetch it. It's a strategy repeated here. Eight tracks in, Delicious provides the most obvious piece of connective tissue to previous albums, thanks to an aching Cure-esque guitar solo. But you've experienced a markedly different APC by the time you get there.

That includes So Long, And Thanks For All The Fish, which has much in common with a song by Maynard's other band, Tool. He is, after all, the man who listed the reasons he wanted to see Los Angeles flushed into the ocean on the title-track of the prog-metallers' 1996 album Ænima, and here similar sentiments are juxtaposed with Eat The Elephant's most bombastic song, suggesting wry resignation to '*The final curtain call in all its atomic pageantry*' has replaced the boiling rage of yore. It also showcases one of many very different vocal performances from Maynard, no doubt informed by the three Puscifer albums he's made in the intervening years; with the frequent Bowie-isms in his delivery made all the more explicit by So Long…'s mention of '*Major Tom*', alongside references to late boxer Muhammad Ali and Princess Leia.

Eat The Elephant fights on several fronts, simultaneously reminding listeners what makes APC so special, while also providing enough progression – and then some, in the case of weird electro-orchestral closer Get The Lead Out – to make their return truly count. It's also a political album, but one that neither panders, nor condescends, to the listener. What, you may ask, does that title mean? The clues are there on an album that poses many questions, but doesn't offer up any easy answers. You'll still be figuring it out in another 14 years. **JAMES HICKIE**

PHOTO: TIM CADIENTE

Q&A MAYNARD JAMES KEENAN

(VOCALS)

You seem particularly proud of this album. Is that because of what you've put into it, or the fact that it got made at all, given the lengthy gap since the last record?
"I'm proud of it because it's a solid album. Billy [Howerdel, guitar] presented some fantastic music for me to run with, but I also feel that it's another light on what we're capable of – what I'm capable of, and what he's capable of."

You're doing some very interesting, things vocally on this album…
"Some of the things that have come out of this have boggled my mind. People who have paid attention to Puscifer, when they heard this album they asked me, 'Is [Puscifer co-vocalist] Carina Round on this album?' because of some of the singing. And I'm like, 'No, it's not fucking Carina! Oh, so you didn't know those are my vocals on Puscifer? What the fuck have you been listening to? It's all there!' People are therefore going to hear things that clarify that."

"THIS IS A LIGHT ON WHAT WE'RE CAPABLE OF…"
MAYNARD JAMES KEENAN

The track Delicious sounds more like material on previous APC albums. Was it a conscious decision not to release this up front for that reason?
"You have to give a nod to where you were, but you have to be more about where you *are*. I am where I am, but I'd rather present you with where I am than bait you with something that shows where I was. It's not very fair to you."

Given your passions for music and comedy, do you have a particular affection for the song So Long, And Thanks For All The Fish, the title of which is taken from a Douglas Adams novel?
"I have a particular tongue-in-cheek giggle when some of my friends hear it. A friend of mine listened to the track and said, 'Did you really just do that?!' So I certainly get a laugh out of that song, because it's definitely Sarcasm 101."

REVIEWS

CASH BACK

METALLICA's classic covers EP gets the reissue treatment

Originally released in 1987, The $5.98 E.P.: Garage Days Re-Revisited has gone down in Metallica lore as an EP worth far more than its short running time and low titular price tag would suggest. Coming a year after the death of bassist Cliff Burton, it marked the recorded debut of new kid Jason Newsted, in a more casual manner than a full, original album could have done, as the latest incarnation of The Four Horsemen stormed through covers of their heroes in a fun, laid-back – although devastatingly powerful – manner. But when these recordings were included with 1998's Garage Inc. double album, it brought to the attention of a whole new generation a fistful of bands who, if not entirely forgotten, were under the radar of Metallica's millions of disciples.

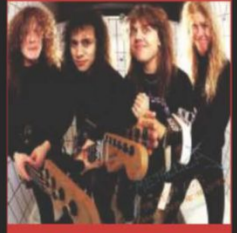
PHOTO: GETTY

Even in its original year of release, it shone a light on some of the bands within. Though already covered by Metallica, and one of Lars Ulrich's key inspirations for starting a band, NWOBHM heroes Diamond Head – whose Helpless gets the Metalli-treatment here – were not exactly a household name among American metal fans. Nor were Welsh blues-rock trio Budgie, original authors of Crash Course In Brain Surgery, included here. Similarly, as brilliant as Scottish metal maniacs Holocaust were, it's unlikely that many would have heard The Small Hours on that band's fantastically-titled 1983 EP, Holocaust Live (Hot Curry And Wine) before they heard James Hetfield yelling over the top of it.

METALLICA

THE $5.98 E.P.: GARAGE DAYS RE-REVISITED

(BLACKENED)



KKKKK

What Garage Days… also did was show the breadth of Metallica's influences, and exposed a bit of what went into their engine. In a time when punk and metal were not really seen as great bedfellows, the inclusion of Misfits' Last Caress and Green Hell was something of an out-of-step choice, but one that worked brilliantly. And then there's The Four Horsemen's version of The Wait by British post-punk godfathers Killing Joke, which takes on a superb new dimension, just as it showed a new side to Metallica that, as the band continued to grow, would show itself more and more. Again, it's hard to imagine so many of the metal massive of America getting turned on to it otherwise.

But above all else, this is great because it's good songs in a load of different styles excellently repurposed by a band absolutely on fire. Whether you get this because of the desirable array of formats – CD, vinyl, tape, or longbox for the *really* old school – because you've never heard it before, or you're a total completist, the effect remains the same now as then: it's totally killer. And now you've potentially got five killer bands to go and seek out as well. NICK RUSKELL

KERMES
WE CHOOSE PRETTY NAMES
(ROBOT NEEDS HOME)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Pixies, itoldyouiwouldeatyou, Happy Accidents

■ Imagine the worst moment of self-consciousness you've ever experienced happening at twice the volume. Pack it into a Catherine wheel and you'll have a good idea of what Leicester punks Kermes' debut sounds like. The title-track is a high-wire act of weirdo punk guitar and twitchy rhythms that beg you to dance your pain away. Yet Kermes also reveal dreamier depths. Time To Shut Him Up sways on Cure-esque pop that bubbles over into heartbeat-skipping drums and punkish yelps. If that sounds scatterbrained, it's all glued together by sticky pop sensibilities and the unmitigated expressiveness of Emily Rose Teece's voice. Whether vocalising gender-queering vulnerability on Boyfriend or spitting out the line, *'What kind of myths will you construct to deal with this?'* on trans open letter Yr Beast, she sounds self-aware yet assertive. By turns outraged and outrageous, We Choose Pretty Names is an empowering debut of fearsome intelligence and attitude. **JAMES MACKINNON**

SETTLE YOUR SCORES
BETTER LUCK TOMORROW
(SHARPTONE)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Four Year Strong, Set Your Goals, A Day To Remember

■ There's a track by internet pop-punk comedian Jarrod Alonge called Take It Easycore. It's a song that gleefully mocks all the beardy, earnest, aggressive-then-catchy clichés associated with 'heavy' pop-punk. The reason this is relevant to Ohio quintet Settle Your Scores is because on Better Luck Tomorrow it sounds like they're actually sending themselves up. Flitting between sickeningly sweet pop-punk and unremarkable heavy breakdowns, this record sounds painfully dated. Things really aren't helped by nauseatingly off-the-peg lyrics such as Keep Your Chin Up And Your Expectations Down's, *'A different girl, a different name, but the story stays the same.'* And that's without mentioning the irony-impaired song titles (Stuck In The Suburbs, Your Teeth Vs. The Pavement). We'd wish them better luck tomorrow, but this is so by-the-numbers that tomorrow's edition would probably be the same load of rubbish then as well. **JAKE RICHARDSON**

VOMITOR
PESTILENT DEATH
(INVICTUS)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Slayer, Morbid Angel, Motörhead

■ Vomitor are not interested in precision. Nor do they give much of a hoot about getting the perfect take. Or really sharp production. Or basically anything other than thrashing the fuck out of each of their songs as violently as possible, then going down the pub to listen to more metal. Hailing from Australia, and sounding like every possible strain of outlaw you can think of, what Vomitor do on Pestilent Death is thrashy death metal in its most unreconstructed form. And brilliantly so. The rattling Roar Of War lives up to its title, as does Tremendous Insane, while Hells Butcher is a B-movie journey into the macabre, all laid down by basically walking into a room, hitting 'record' and doing their worst, probably in front of a poster of Lemmy. It's a middle-fingered attitude that cuts through every wild, snarling workout, with killer riffs sounding as raw as a fresh corpse. And, really, that's exactly what you want from death metal, isn't it? **NICK RUSKELL**

AS SIRENS FALL
WHERE LOST THINGS GO
(SELF-RELEASED)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: My Chemical Romance, AFI, Creeper

■ Keighley quintet As Sirens Fall do not look good on paper. For example: they're a band who look like My Chemical Romance, sound like My Chemical Romance, *and* do My Chemical Romance covers live. Unfortunately, their self-described "aggressive pop" doesn't sound too great on this EP, either. Things take a massive nosedive when Skindred's Benji Webbe pops up during In My Mind to do some shouting, and they don't get much better with insufferable piano ballad Getaway, which features the kind of caterwauling that, if listened to through a wall, would sound like there were foxes going at it next door. However, theatrical number She Runs With The Wolves is semi-enjoyable (if you can ignore cringeworthy lyrics like, *'If opportunity doesn't knock, then build a door'*) and opening track Lily proves the quintet *are* actually capable of writing a rousing song. Even if they have almost totally lost their way here. **JENNYFER J. WALKER**

SKELETAL REMAINS
DEVOURING MORTALITY
(CENTURY MEDIA)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Obituary, Death, Slayer

■ For all the attempts to infuse it with hardcore, prog or its blackened sibling, death metal remains at its most potent when stripped down to its putrid essentials. This is something Skeletal Remains understand implicitly, and everything about Devouring Mortality, from its title onwards, positively reeks of the swampy sounds first unearthed in the late '80s. Stomping, blastbeat-driven thrash co-exists with sludgier mid-paced sections, while divebombing solos simply strafe your ears. And while complexity isn't entirely a stranger here, there's a directness about Skeletal Remains' approach that lends tracks like Parasitic Horrors and Seismic Abyss a good deal more accessibility than you might expect from a perusal of the tracklist. Best of all is Catastrophic Retribution, a tune built on Slayer-style riffs that proves so lethally weighty that it could hold its own with the thrash kings. Death metal diehards will devour this fetid feast. **OLLY THOMAS**

REIGNING DAYS
ECLIPSE
(MARSHALL)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Royal Blood, Foo Fighters, Biffy Clyro

■ Look up. There's a new star in the British rock firmament. Not many people have caught its light yet, but with this debut album it could, well, not quite eclipse the competition but certainly outshine its more mundane elements. As opening track Empire crashes in on a monster-sized riff and minimalist beat, Reigning Days' most obvious comparison are Royal Blood, albeit a sparklier, more sweeping version. The tracks that made their first appearance on the band's self-titled 2016 EP all follow that same basic premise, but this full-length debut is a far more diverse beast. Gravity channels the opening from the Foo Fighters' Times Like These before hammering the rest of the song into a jaggedly rhythmic anthem. Inhaler has more of a QOTSA shimmy, while the atmospheric Boy Who Cried Wolf has a delicately crafted chorus to kill for. They're not easy to pigeonhole, but the mix of subtlety and swagger makes this a killer debut album. **PAUL TRAVERS**

PRIMORDIAL
EXILE AMONGST THE RUINS
(METAL BLADE)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Bathory, Enslaved, Grave Pleasures

■ Those who walk in the metal underground will know Ireland's Primordial as one of its most enduring, unwavering, no-bullshit bands. Theirs is a respect earned through integrity, attitude and blood, and a fighting spirit that's always fused with the melancholy in their music to carve them into a force that's genuinely unique, not to mention a dedication to upholding the dogged spirit of metal. On this, their ninth album, we find frontman AA Nemtheanga and his troops on excellent form, and with a few surprises. The band themselves have acknowledged that the songs released ahead of the album's release, most notably the windswept lament of Stolen Years, would not be the most expected of the bunch here. True enough, Primordial have never written a song quite like it, nor the thumping, post-punk energised To Hell Or The Hangman. But it all sounds, crucially, like Primordial, in all their usual fighty glory. And once again, one of the most dedicated bands in the metal underground win the day. **NICK RUSKELL**

WAR ON WOMEN
CAPTURE THE FLAG
(BRIDGE NINE)

KKKKK

FOR FANS OF: Bikini Kill, The Slits, L7

■ Music is a weapon. It can start fires no watercannon can put out. Unsurprisingly, War On Women's second album flickers like a Molotov cocktail of defiant fervour and activist ideology, ready to spark against the frontal lobe on the very first listen.

Stripping back the gang vocals and thrashier tendencies of 2015's self-titled debut, Capture The Flag bristles with punkier texture and more singular sloganeering. Raging against injustices as varied as female genital mutilation (The Violence Of Bureaucracy) and the fetishisation of motherhood (Childbirth), vocalist Shawna Potter aggressively expands the remit of the Riot Grrrl. But it's amidst the shredded six strings and rowdy lyricism (*'Wink-wink, nudge-nudge, touch me and I'll fuck you up!'*) of Donald Trump-baiting highlight Predator In Chief that WOW truly raise the bar.

Alongside THE FEVER 333's Made An America EP, this is the sound of righteous anger in 2018. And it's absolutely superb. **SAM LAW**

LIVES

KKKKK = CLASSIC KKKK = EXCELLENT KKK = GOOD KK = AVERAGE K = POOR

AUS FEST!

Nostalgia reigns Down Under as DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL makes its Australian debut

DOWNLOAD AUSTRALIA

FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE, MELBOURNE

24/03/2018

It's likely that the manicured grounds of Melbourne's Flemington Racecourse have never experienced anything like *this*. The home of one of the world's most famous horse races, the Melbourne Cup, is today housing 28,000 punters who've been starved of a rock and metal festival since the demise of Soundwave in 2015. And while this one-dayer may be smaller than its UK parent, Download's arrival in Aus is cause for celebration.

It seems odd that Californian extremists **NAILS** *(KKKKK)* should bring the first sunshine of the day, but then perhaps the persistent rain simply couldn't handle the malevolent din of their early afternoon set. "Y'all are a bunch of sick c**ts," growls frontman Todd Jones upon seeing the frenzy that greets Violence Is Forever. Thanks.

NECK DEEP *(KKKK)* draw an even more passionate response, with the crowd matching vocalist Ben Barlow word-for-word on opener Happy Judgement Day. Even that pales next to the mass sing-along of December, though.

By contrast, today will not be **MASTODON**'s *(KKK)* day. This is both their first gig of 2018 and guitarist Bill Kelliher's birthday, but what should be a celebratory affair is instead oddly subdued, with the Atlanta metallers going through Blood And Thunder in workmanlike fashion.

GOOD CHARLOTTE *(KKKKK)* are the only pop-punk band on the two main stages. Remarkably, they get the response of the day, shamelessly playing on the nostalgia factor by opening with 2002 hit The Anthem and drawing primarily on their first three albums. It may start to rain before Lifestyles Of The Rich & Famous, but that dampens no-one's enthusiasm.

Speaking of nostalgia, here's **LIMP BIZKIT** *(KKK)*, partying like it's 1999. Theirs is a set of bangers – Break Stuff, My Generation, Rollin' – but it's also a haphazard affair, full of dull jams, misjudged covers (Wes Borland's take on Smells Like Teen Spirit) and Freddy D's moronic banter.

PROPHETS OF RAGE *(KKKK)* are the third band of the day to commence their set with an air-raid siren (clearly the must-have fashion item for any discerning festival act). The next hour leans heavily on Rage Against The Machine songs, though Living On The 110 from Prophets' debut LP fares well. Nothing, however, can compete with closer Killing In The Name, with Chuck D announcing, "Dangerous times call for dangerous songs. This song's the most dangerous of them all." Chaos follows, naturally.

Few bands could follow such madness, but **KORN** *(KKKK)* do so brilliantly. Rotting In Vain is a shock-and-awe opener that makes way for Falling Away From Me and Here To Stay, reminders of how deep Korn's catalogue extends. Twist and Shoots And Ladders are welcome throwbacks to the mid-'90s, before Freak On A Leash serves as a reminder that, even in their third decade, Korn are still an astonishingly powerful live force.

Consider Download's first trip Down Under a success. Same again in 2019, please. ROD YATES

VIEW FROM THE MERCH DESK

Hats off to this load of merch sellers at Download, who were fully prepared for a sudden run on hats. Millinery enthusiasts would have been spoilt for choice, which is exactly why you go to a festival, isn't it? Look at this bloke, trying to decide between two. Decisions, decisions…

PHOTOS: IAN LAIDLAW, KANE HIBBERD

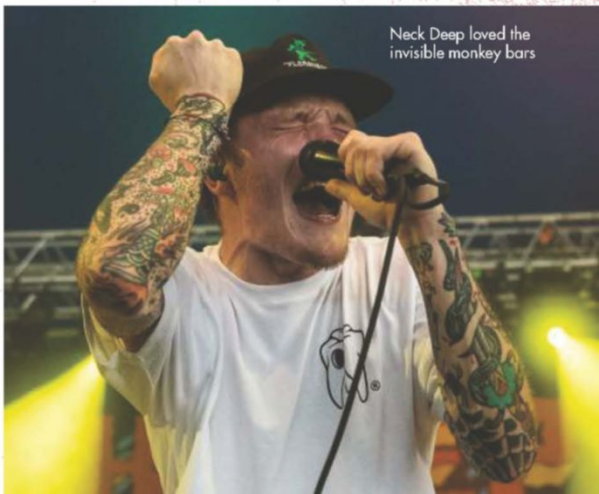
Jonathan Davis had a microphone in there somewhere

Korn's onstage barbecue got out of control

Tom Morello: The world's angriest tai chi instructor

Limp Bizkit, mid-larking about

Good Charlotte bust out a cover of I'm A Little Teapot



Neck Deep loved the invisible monkey bars

LIVES

MARS ATTACKS!

No guitars? No problem. THIRTY SECONDS TO MARS land in London

THIRTY SECONDS TO MARS

THE O2, LONDON

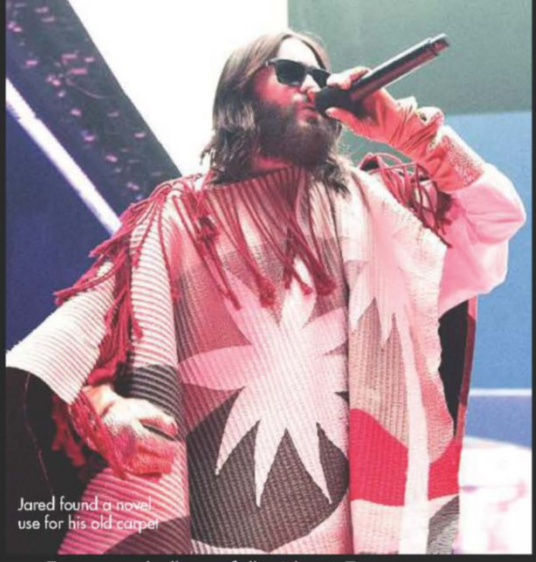
27/03/2018

KKKKK

■ "Leave the lights on," instructs Jared Leto. "I wanna get naked real quick."

Welcome to A Quiet Night In With Thirty Seconds To Mars. There's no actual nudity, but there's plenty to challenge your idea of a rock show, and even more to make you question whether that even matters. It is one of the most unusual performances you will ever see. And, crucially, it's done with class, charm and skill to spare.

As the lights descend, what looks like a huge shipping crate on the in-the-round stage suddenly breaks apart, revealing the band, and the prop itself to be an internally lit bit of scenery that floats and moves about during the gig, setting the mood for each song with different coloured lights. It's impressive, so much so that you actually take a minute to realise that guitarist Tomo Miličević isn't onstage (off tour for personal reasons). And it takes even longer to clock that at no point tonight does Jared pick up a guitar, either. It's just him and drummer, and older brother, Shannon Leto up there, with other musicians in the shadows. But rather than denting things, instrument-less Jared is free to perform the living shit out of the show, part frontman, part cult cheerleader, while dressed in a hippie rug thing that looks like part of the wardrobe from a production of Jared And His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.



Jared found a novel use for his old carpet

Enormous balloons fall mid-set. Fans are brought onstage for a stellar Kings And Queens. New song Walk On Water makes much more sense with thousands of The Echelon singing it. And through it all, Jared leads us through his own personal vision of rock'n'roll with the confidence of a general. So what that only half of the two people onstage are playing an instrument? It's a crack arena show that exists entirely on 30STM's own terms, and is uniquely brilliant for it. NICK RUSKELL

PHOTOS: PAUL HARRIES

"Behold! My balls!"

TESTAMENT

+ ANNIHILATOR, VADER

O2 RITZ, MANCHESTER 30/03/2018

KKKKK

Bay Area thrash legends slay in fits and starts

■ You've heard of the Big Four of thrash metal, but if the top league was extended, Testament would be the undisputed fifth. They've never strayed too far from the genre's original blueprint and, across their 35-year career, they've also pretty much perfected it. They've also brought a couple of other metal legends out on this jaunt, too. Six o'clock might be far too early for a trip to the Dark Side, but Polish death metal loons Vader drag us there nevertheless. Annihilator, meanwhile, are more refined, mixing polished sheet metal riffs with serrated hooks. Testament are also honed to razor sharpness – when they're galloping through actual songs, anyway. No thrash gig has needed a bass solo since Cliff Burton died, and no show ever needed four extended muso spots, plus an instrumental tune. It makes it all seriously disjointed, and the momentum isn't really able to build. When they're rampaging through classics like Into The Pit and Over The Wall or newer tracks like The Pale King, Testament are still superb, but this is a show that needs some ruthless pruning. **PAUL TRAVERS**

ELECTRIC WIZARD

+ TOMBSTONED, HOODED MENACE

CIRCUS, HELSINKI 30/03/2018

KKKKK

Sex, drugs and doom'n'roll devastate the Finnish capital

■ Justin Oborn only says one thing onstage tonight, but his few words sum up the evening's vibe perfectly. "Thanks for the weed, Finland," the Electric Wizard frontman drawls. "It's pretty good, actually." Tonight is about two things: blown amps and blown minds, perfectly kicked off by Finnish heavyists Hooded Menace. Though not actually hooded, their weighty doom comes with no small amount of menace, sounding like an entire graveyard come to life to form a metal band. Tombstoned are less heavy but, backed by visuals of really far-out space stuff, their stoner grooves still drag your mind somewhere beyond the Earth's atmosphere. But Electric Wizard pull you into their very own circle of Hell, one where your whole vision is filled by projections of gnarly '70s porn and horror movies, and there's no escape from the violent, doomy din of The Satanic Rites Of Drugula and the misanthropic Return Trip. See You In Hell, from last year's Wizard Bloody Wizard album, is a welcome, sleazy addition to their live assault, but it's now-traditional closer Funeralopolis that's most destructive, bringing the whole nightmarish thing to a climax in an orgy of feedback, violent vibes and hate. Even if you're judge sober, this is still a hell of a trip. **NICK RUSKELL**

Two-player SingStar Karaoke always got rowdy

ROLO TOMASSI

+ PALM READER, CRYPTODIRA

AUDIO, GLASGOW 03/04/2018

KKKKK

Sheffield art-metal shapeshifters draw Scotland into their magnificent depths

■ "Rock 'n' Rolo!" yells Rolo Tomassi synthmaster/mouthpiece James Spence. "Why isn't that on a T-shirt?!" Why, indeed? Beneath all their beautiful brutality and churning atmospherics, the Sheffield quintet are having the time of their lives tonight, and their stunning fifth album Time Will Die And Love Will Bury It has reinforced their resolve. Accordingly, day one of this totally sold-out UK tour feels as much like cork-popping celebration as hard-swinging showcase.

Long Island post-metallers Cryptodira (named after a sub-order of turtle) get the party started with rough-hewn out-of-their-shells aplomb, before Nottingham brutalists Palm Reader crank it up. Barricaded in by heaving bodies, they're light on free-roaming mosh-madness this evening, but the depth and dexterity of songs from new album Braille grab your attention like a boot in the face.

"We've been doing this for a minute now," grins James as Rolo roll on. Although showcasing none of their earlier records' crashing Nintendocore tonight, their evolution is fully unfurled. Aftermath delivers calm-before-the-storm melody, before Rituals shatters it with a blast of scourging brutality. Eva Spence remains the loose hinge on which such tonal shifts pivot; her gnashing transitions from slinking sensuality to convulsing savagery ensures the thrashing dramatics of a song like Stage Knives are still thrillingly unsettling all these years down the line.

There's a fleshed-out fulfilment of vision now, too. Contretemps feels like dropping into an atmospheric post-metal cavern. Meanwhile, as Opalescent jackknifes into Balancing The Dark, it's like finding yourself in a bar-fight at a jazz club. Even on seven-minute encore Illuminare, the band find fresh territory to explore, riding a storm of crashing cymbals before cutting us adrift in a sea of post-rock euphoria. In truth, it all underlines the fact that Rolo Tomassi have outgrown subterranean shoeboxes like these. With the post-show champagne spilling into smiles all round, though, it's clear they're happy transforming such spaces into their own cathedrals of sound for a little while yet. **SAM LAW**

"Christ, look at the state of the ceiling..."

PHOTOS: RYAN JOHNSTON

GET IN THE VAN

NECK DEEP

Ever wondered if touring in a pop-punk band is actually all pizza, partying and pissing about? Well, wonder no more...

PHOTOS: ELLIOTT INGHAM

WHAT GOES ON TOUR...

...usually stays on tour, but NECK DEEP play by their own rules!

Our favourite thing to watch on the tour bus is... The first Inbetweeners movie.

The golden rule of our tour bus is... No smoking, ever.

The first thing we do when we get to a venue is... Check out the green rooms, check out the stage, and get on the wifi.

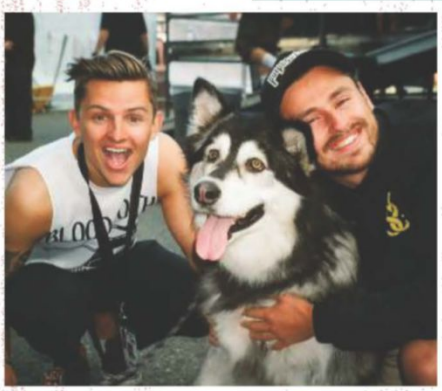
The one essential rider request is... Haribo. Not to eat, but to drink...

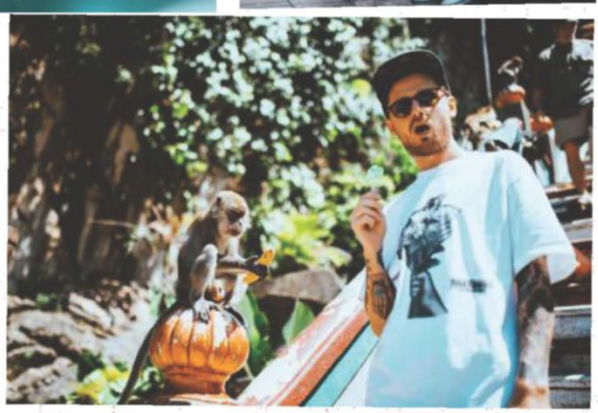
The person who always has spares of everything in their bag is... No-one, we suck.

The one thing that annoys everyone on tour is... The mess.

We pass our free time before shows by... Playing video games, eating, drinking, fucking around, working out, watching movies, mooching about the city we're in.

The saddest thing about leaving tour to go home is... The people you leave behind.





GIG GUIDE

HARD KNOX!

Following the departure of singer Mikey Chapman, MALLORY KNOX are heading out as a quartet. It's a chance to hit 'reset'...

Q&A SAM DOUGLAS (VOCALS/BASS)

This is the first time you've toured as a quartet, with you fronting the band. How are you feeling?
"Ever since I've known about us being a four-piece with me up front, I've thought about it every day and how it's going to pan out. I know as a band we'll be able to pull off the songs brilliantly, and that will always come naturally to us, but I don't really know how I'm going to do as a frontman until I step up onstage. I'm not one of those people that plans gimmicks or inspirational speeches. I'm just going to have to grow with the role, be myself, and see how it goes."

How did you go about taking on some of the older songs that Mikey sang?
"That was one of the things that made me take a while to work out if I wanted to be the singer of the band. But we're at a place now where we're happy with the set and with how the songs sound. Obviously, there's some songs I'll never be able to sing, as Mikey had a bit more range than myself, but we've done the songs and we've made them sound the best they possibly can. It's breathed some new life into those older songs. It's been fun trying to make the old songs fit into what we are now."

Can we expect a lot of new songs?
"If it were up to me, we'd be playing five or six! We're definitely going to be playing some new songs, but we're also going to be playing all the old stuff. It'll be maybe three new songs mixed in with 10 or so older ones."

Is playing these smaller venues a chance to start rebuilding the band again?
"It's back to basics. It's something we were talking about a few years ago, to be honest with you. Before Mikey left the band, it was something we wanted to do – going back to playing 200 to 300-cap pub shows. With everything that went on it made sense to do this. It feels like it's a rebirth, a new beginning for the band, and it's the right thing to do to see where we're at. I think there's going to be no bullshit with the show, it's just back to basics and back to being a band again, because it's something we haven't done in the UK for a while."

> **"THIS FEELS LIKE A REBIRTH, A NEW BEGINNING..."**
> SAM DOUGLAS

How is the feeling within the Mallory Knox camp going into this tour?
"It's good to be at the point we're at now, where we don't have to worry about announcing Mikey leaving and figuring out if we could do another record. After the year we've had, it feels good. We will be signing a new record deal, and it's all about writing songs again. Being signed to Sony was fun while it lasted, but by the end, it was starting to become a chore – it just wasn't working any more. I think we are in the strongest position we can be, considering what's happened, and we're all thriving off that. We're all hungry again, and we want to prove people wrong."

After this tour you're playing a load of festivals like Camden Rocks and Fat Lip. Are you just wanting to get out and play as much as you can?
"We didn't really do much of the UK festival scene last year. We only did Reading & Leeds, and the rest were all in Europe. But that was a weird time for us, because we knew that chapter of the band was coming to a close. It's nice to play more festivals this year without any pressure, where we can concentrate on playing, so that's why we're doing all the smaller UK festivals this summer. Again, it just made sense to do as many as we can. We just want to play anything and everything."

DATES

BRIGHTON The Haunt April 16,
CARDIFF The Globe 17,
EXETER Cavern 18,
STOKE Sugarmill 20,
GLASGOW King Tut's 22,
MANCHESTER Rebellion 23,
BIRMINGHAM Mama Roux's 24,
NOTTINGHAM Bodega 26.
Support: Dead!

WORDS: JAMES HINGLE PHOTO: GETTY

NOW BOOKING

☆ = JUST ANNOUNCED

2000TREES Festival Line-up: Enter Shikari, At The Drive In, Basement, Arcane Roots, Creeper, Hell Is For Heroes, Touché Amoré, Turbowolf, Gold Key, Black Foxxes, Boston Manor, Conjurer, SHVPES, Loathe, Chapter And Verse, Holding Absence, Holiday Oscar, Ho99o9, The Xcerts, Black Peaks, Hellions, Dream State, Slaftace, Press to MECO, Fangclub, Gallops, Nervus, Black Futures, GenderRoles, Bitch Falcon, Lady Bird, Sun Arcana, Haggard Cat, Sean McGowan, Frightened Rabbit, Blood Red Shoes, And So I Watch You From Afar, My Vitriol, Black Honey, Queen Kwong, VUKOVI, Blood Command, DEAD!, Brutus, Funeral Shakes, Nova Twins, Bloody Knees, Gloo, Muskets, P D Liddle, No Violet, Phoxjaw, Warshy, Sœur. Cheltenham Upcote Farm July 12 – 14.

A PERFECT CIRCLE O2 Apollo Manchester June 12, London O2 Academy Brixton 13.

ALICE IN CHAINS O2 Academy Leeds June 16, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 17.

American Nightmare London Camden Underworld April 28, Brighton Haunt 29.

ANDREW W.K. Cardiff Great Hall April 13, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 14, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 15, Norwich Waterfront 18, Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms 19, O2 Ritz Manchester 20, Glasgow Garage 21.

ARCTANGENT Line-up: And So I Watch You From Afar, Pianos Become The Teeth, Foxing, Giraffes? Giraffes!, Jamie Lenman, Rolo Tomassi, Alpha Male Tea Party, Talons, Tangled Hair, Svalbard, Gulfer, Body Hound, Glassjaw, Shellac, La Dispute, Arcane Roots, Alcest, Zeal & Ardor, Black Peaks, VENNART, Delta Sleep, Telepathy, People Like Milk Products (Memory Of Elephants & Chiyoda Ku Big Band), Scalping, Wren, Jo Quail, VLMV, Vasquez, Mouse On The Keys, Plini, Tides Of Man, OHHMS, Poly-Math, Jean Jean, Pijn & Conjurer, Conjurer, Blueneck, Boss Keloid, Mol, Orchards, Halo Tora, Bad Sign, Natalie Evans, Death And The Penguin, Coldbones, Black Futures, Seven Colour Drive, Codices, Only Echoes Remain. Bristol Fernhill Farm August 16 – 18.

AS IT IS Norwich Arts Centre May 21, Sheffield Plug 22, Bristol Lantern 24, London St Pancras Old Church 25. Support: Dream State.

BLACK PEAKS St Albans Horn May 1, Aldershot West End Centre 2, Bath Moles 3.

BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL Line-up: Judas Priest, Gojira, Nightwish, Emperor, DevilDriver, Watain, Orden Ogan, Fozzy, Combichrist, Memoriam, Septicflesh, Doro, Bloodbath, Cannibal Corpse, At The Gates, Kamelot, Mr. Big, Alestorm, Suicidal Tendencies, Venom Inc., Jasta, Wednesday 13, Amaranthe, Orphaned Land, Doro, Bleed From Within, Exhorder, Ingested, Mantar, Pallbearer, Vola, Sangre, Dead Label, Doomsday Outlaw, Underside, King Leviathan, Fahran. Derby Catton Hall Park August 9 – 12.

BOOMTOWN FESTIVAL Line-up: Limp Bizkit, Enter Shikari, Napalm Death, Soulfly, Capdown, Idles, Ho99o9, Earth Crisis, Hacktivist, Turbowolf, Sonic Boom Six, Voodoo Glow Skulls, Random Hand, Adolescents, Jaya The Cat, The Rumjacks, Inner Terrestrials, Moscow Death Brigade, Samsara Blues Experiment, Haggard Cat, [Spunge]. Winchester Matterley Estate August 9 – 12.

CAMDEN ROCKS FESTIVAL Line-up: Twin Atlantic, PiL, Beatsteaks, Raging Speedhorn, Sonic Boom Six, The Red Paintings, SHVPES, Ducking Punches, Carcer City, Press to MECO, Gold Key, Skarlett Riot, Death Remains and more! Camden @ various venues June 2.

CANCER BATS London Camden Underworld April 26 – 28.

CASEY London Boston Music Room April 13, Leeds Key Club 14, Newcastle Jumpin Jacks 15, Plymouth Underground 16, Manchester Satan's Hollow 17, Birmingham Asylum2 18, Nottingham Rock City Basement 19.

CLUTCH O2 Academy Bristol December 18, O2 Academy Glasgow 19, Manchester Academy 20, London O2 Brixton Academy 21, O2 Academy Birmingham 22.

CODE ORANGE Nottingham Rescue Rooms April 15, Newcastle Cluny 18, Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms 22. Support: Employed To Serve.

THE BRONX

Dates: Manchester Gorilla June 9, London Camden Electric Ballroom 10.
Support: Culture Abuse.

CONVERGE Manchester Academy II April 25, London Camden Electric Ballroom 26. Support: Crowbar, Thou, Grave Pleasures.

DANZIG Glasgow Barrowlands August 6, London O2 Academy Brixton 7.

DEAD SWANS Glasgow Audio May 10, Manchester Deaf Institute 11, Bristol Louisiana 12, London Camden Assembly 13.

DEF LEPPARD Cardiff Motorpoint Arena December 4, London O2 Arena 6, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 8, Metro Radio Arena 9, Glasgow SSE Hydro 11, Manchester Arena 12, Sheffield FlyDSA Arena 14, Liverpool Echo Arena 15, Birmingham Arena 17. Support: Cheap Trick.

DESERTFEST Line-up: Monster Magnet, Nebula, Eyehategod, Hawkwind, Jex Thoth, Planet Of Zeus, Black Moth, The Black Wizards, Graveyard, Napalm Death, Warning, Winterfylleth, Five The Hierophant and more! London Camden May 4 – 6 @ various venues.

DON BROCO Dublin Tivoli April 23, Belfast Mandela Hall 24, O2 Academy Oxford 26, O2 Academy Sheffield 27, O2 Academy Liverpool 28, Lincoln Engine Shed 29, Stoke Keele University May 1, Northampton Roadmender 2, Exeter Lemon Grove 3.

DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL Line-up: Ozzy Osbourne, Avenged Sevenfold, Guns N' Roses, Marilyn Manson, BABYMETAL, Asking Alexandria, Black Veil Brides, Alexisonfire, Bullet For My Valentine, Rise Against, Parkway Drive, Body Count, The Hives, In This Moment, Neck Deep, Meshuggah, Mayday Parade, The Pink Slips, WSTR, Dream State, Black Stone Cherry, Boston Manor, Cradle Of Filth, DragonForce, Hatebreed, Inglorious, Marmozets, Monster Truck, Shinedown, The Struts, The Temperance Movement, Thunder, Volbeat, Whiskey Myers, Bury Tomorrow, Corrosion Of Conformity, Dead Cross, Jonathan Davis, Kreator, L7, Powerflo, Thrice, Turbonegro, You Me At Six, Cancer Bats, Employed To Serve, Jamie Lenman, Milk Teeth, Puppy, Stick To Your Guns, Stray From The Path, The Bottom Line, The Bronx, The Faim, The Maine, All Them Witches, Baroness, blessthefall, Death Blooms, Enmmure, Gold Key, Higher Power, Knocked Loose, Koyo, Malevolence, Miss May I, Myrkur, No Hot Ashes, Plini, Rolo Tomassi, SHVPES, Sun Arcana, Tesseract, The Hyena Kill, Thy Art Is Murder, Tigress, Wayward Sons, Zeal & Ardor, Avatar, Hell Is For Heroes, Andrew W.K., CKY, Nothing More, Culture Abuse, Lawnmower Deth, Starcrawler, Bad Religion, Ded, Being As An Ocean, A, Black Foxxes, Bad Cop/Bad Cop, Igorr, Loathe, Kaiser Franz Josef, Helpless, Cellar Darling, Anchor Lane, Ecca Vandal. Derby Donington Park June 8 – 10.

EMPLOYED TO SERVE Norwich Waterfront May 16, Leicester Cookie 17, Huddersfield Parish 18, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 19. Support: Conjurer, God Complex.

EUROPE Manchester Academy September 14, Glasgow Barrowland 15, O2 Academy Newcastle 17, Nottingham Rock City 18, O2 Institute Birmingham 19, Cardiff St. David's Hall 21, Portsmouth Pyramids Centre 22, London Royal Albert Hall 23, Brighton Dome 24. Support: King King.

EVERY TIME I DIE London Garage May 29.

FOO FIGHTERS Manchester Etihad Stadium June 19, London Stadium 22 – 23. Support: Wolf Alice (19 and 22 only), Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes (22 only), The Kills (23 only), Slaves (23 only).

FRANK TURNER & THE SLEEPING SOULS Manchester Academy April 13, Dublin Academy 15 – 16, Belfast Limelight 18, Aberdeen Garage 20, Edinburgh Liquid Room 21, O2 Academy Newcastle 22, O2 Academy Sheffield 24, O2 Academy Liverpool 25, O2 Academy Bristol 27, Exeter Uni Great Hall 28, Cambridge Corn Exchange 30, O2 Guildhall Southampton May 1, Southend Cliffs Pavilion 2, O2 Academy Leicester 4, O2 Academy Oxford 5, Hull City Hall 8, Norwich UEA 9.

THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM London Eventim Apollo Hammersmith July 20 – 21, Dublin Vicar Street 23, Glasgow Barrowland 24, Manchester Eventim Apollo 25. Support: The Flatliners, Matthew Ryan.

GLASSJAW London O2 Academy Brixton August 18.

HALESTORM Dublin Academy September 19, Belfast Limelight 20, O2 Academy Sheffield 22, O2 Academy Glasgow 23, O2 Academy Birmingham 24, O2 Apollo Manchester 26, London O2 Academy Brixton 28, O2 Academy Bristol 29.

HEART OF A COWARD London Boston Music Room May 30, Manchester Rebellion June 1.

HEAVY SCOTLAND Line-up: Carcass, Gama Bomb, Nervosa, Perpetua. Edinburgh Corn Exchange August 31 – September 2.

HO99O9 Bristol Exchange May 24, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 25, Manchester Soup Kitchen 26, London Lexington 27.

HOLLYWOOD VAMPIRES Birmingham Genting Arena June 16, Manchester Arena 17, Glasgow SSE Hydro 19, London SSE Arena, Wembley 20. Support: The Darkness, The Damned.

IRON MAIDEN Newcastle Metro Radio Arena July 31, Belfast SSE Arena August 2, Aberdeen AECC BHGE Arena 4, Manchester Arena 6, Birmingham Genting Arena 7, London O2 Arena 10. Support: Killswitch Engage.

KARMA TO BURN London Camden Black Heart June 18, Exeter Cavern 19, Bristol Exchange 20, Coventry Phoenix 21, Manchester Rebellion 22, Newcastle Think Tank? 23, Glasgow Cathouse 24, Leeds Temple Of Boom 25, Milton Keynes Craufurd Arms 26, Oxford Cellar 27, Bournemouth Anvil 28. Support: Desert Storm.

LOWER THAN ATLANTIS Exeter Lemongrove April 11, Southampton Engine Rooms 12, Watford Colosseum 13, Southend Chinnerys 14, Brighton Concorde II 15, O2 Academy Oxford May 3, Reading Sub89 4, Wrexham Central Station 5, Liverpool Hangar34 7, Aberdeen Lemon Tree 8, Edinburgh Liquid Rooms 9, Middlesbrough Empire 11, Hull Welly 12, York Fibbers 13, Sheffield Plug 14. Support: Milk Teeth (April 2 – 15), Boston Manor (May 3 – 14), The Faim.

MACHINE HEAD O2 Guildhall Southampton May 13, Cardiff University 14, O2 Academy Bristol 15, O2 Academy Birmingham 17, London Camden Roundhouse 18 – 19, Nottingham Rock City 21, O2 Academy Newcastle 22, O2 Academy Glasgow 23, Manchester Academy 25.

THE MAINE London Camden Dingwalls June 6, Manchester Deaf Institute 7.

MALLORY KNOX Brighton Haunt April 16, Cardiff Globe 17, Exeter Cavern 18, Stoke Sugarmill 20, Glasgow King Tut's 22, Manchester Rebellion 23, Birmingham Mama Roux's 24, Nottingham Bodega 26. Support: Dead!.

MARMOZETS Norwich Waterfront May 4, O2 Academy Liverpool 5, Newcastle Boiler Shop Hit The North Festival 6, Exeter Lemon Grove 7, Northampton Roadmenders 9, Coventry Kasbah 10, O2 Academy Oxford 11. London O2 Forum Kentish Town October 19. Support: Black Peaks.

MELTDOWN FESTIVAL Line-up: Nine Inch Nails, Deftones, Placebo, My Bloody Valentine, Mogwai, 65daysofstatic, Alcest, MONO. London Southbank Centre June 15 – 24.

MODERN LIFE IS WAR Brighton Haunt June 25, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 26, Bristol Exchange 27, London Camden Underworld 28.

MOVEMENTS Leicester Cookie April 30, Newcastle Think Tank? May 1, Glasgow King Tut's 2, Leeds Key Club 4, Manchester Night People 5, Birmingham Asylum 6, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 7, Brighton Sticky Mike's Frog Bar 8, London Camden Assembly 9.

NICKELBACK Glasgow SSE Hydro May 3, Leeds First Direct Arena 5, Liverpool Echo Arena 7, Manchester Arena 8, Birmingham Genting Arena 10, London O2 Arena 11, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 13. Support: Seether.

NIGHTWISH London SSE Arena Wembley December 8, Birmingham Arena 10, Manchester Arena 11. Support: Beast In Black.

NOVELISTS London Boston Music Room May 1, Glasgow Garage Attic 2, Birmingham Asylum II 3, Manchester Rebellion 4, Sheffield Mulberry Bar 5. Support: Landmvrks.

OF MICE & MEN O2 Academy Bristol April 21, O2 ABC Glasgow 22, O2 Ritz Manchester 23, O2 Institute Birmingham 25, Norwich UEA 26, London Camden KOKO 27. Support: Wage War, Sylar.

OUTBREAK FEST Line-up: Code Orange, Turnstile, Cro-Mags, Floorpunch, Angel Dust, Fury, Jesus Piece, Big Cheese, Servitude. Leeds Canal Mills June 16 – 17.

PEARL JAM London O2 Arena June 18 – 19.

PILE UP FESTIVAL Line-up: A Wilhelm Scream, Oceans Ate Alaska, Teenage Bottlerocket, Our Hollow, Our Home, Napoleon, Kingdom Of Giants, Invisions, Death Remains, Skarlett Riot, Ravenface, Veridian, Chapter & Verse, Bellevue Days, Black Orchid Empire, Tenements, Silent Screams, Siamese, Falling Red, Palm Reader, Wars, Cove, Woke Up Dead, Bury The Traitor, Kill The Ideal, Deadaudiosaints, 76 Calling. York Fibbers June 22 – 23.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE London Finsbury Park June 30. Support: Iggy Pop, The Hives, Run The Jewels, Brody Dalle.

RAMBLIN' MAN FAIR Line-up: Halestorm, Blackberry Smoke, Sons Of Apollo, Steve Earle And The Dukes, Steel Panther, The Cult, Mott The Hoople, Me And That Man. Maidstone Mote Park June 30 – July 1.

READING & LEEDS FESTIVAL Line-up: Fall Out Boy, Panic! At The Disco, Nothing But Thieves, Wolf Alice, Papa Roach, UNDERØATH, Waterparks, Creeper, Sum 41, Beartooth, Nothing,Nowhere, Hollywood Undead, Slaves, Don Broco, Billy Talent, Deaf Havana, Milk Teeth, Mike Shinoda, Skindred, Trash Boat, Dinosaur Pile-Up, The Used, The Xcerts, The Faim, Black Peaks, Blood Youth, SHVPES, Man With A Mission, Ecca Vandal, Normandie, Sleep Token, Death From Above, Royal Republic.. Reading Richfield Avenue and Leeds Bramham Park August 24 – 26.

REBELLION FESTIVAL Line-up: Public Image Limited, The Menzingers, The Vandals, Buzzcocks, Stiff Little Fingers, Discharge, The Exploited, Ruts DC, Lagwagon, UK Subs, The Adolescents, Raw Power, Toxic Reasons, DRI and many more! Blackpool Winter Gardens August 2 – 5.

REEF / THE WILDHEARTS / TERRORVISION Manchester Academy May 4, Birmingham Digbeth Arena 5, London Eventim Apollo Hammersmith 6, O2 Academy Glasgow 19, O2 Academy Newcastle 20.

SKINDRED Norwich UEA April 19, O2 Guildhall Southampton 20, Nottingham Rock City 21, Manchester Academy 22, O2 ABC Glasgow 24, O2 Academy Bristol 25, O2 Academy Leeds 27, London O2 Academy Brixton 28, O2 Institute Birmingham 29. Support: CKY, Danko Jones.

SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL Line-up: Jimmy Eat World, Taking Back Sunday, Sleeping With Sirens, State Champs, Four Year Strong, Trash Boat, Good Charlotte, PVRIS, Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes, Thursday, Creeper, Every Time I Die, Knuckle Puck, Real Friends, Crown The Empire, Zebrahead, The Audition, Goldfinger, The Skints, Twin Atlantic, Northlane, Trash Boat, ROAM, Broadside, Can't Swim, Capdown, Comeback Kid, Counterparts, Save Ferris, Set Your Goals, Real Friends. Leeds City Centre May 26, Hatfield Park 27, Birmingham NEC Arena 28.

STAND ATLANTIC London Camden Assembly May 25.

STONE FREE FESTIVAL Line-up: Megadeth, Scorpions, Yes, Roger Hodgson, Joanne Shaw Taylor, Buckcherry. London O2 Arena June 16 – 17.

STONE SOUR Manchester O2 Apollo June 17, London Camden Roundhouse 18, Nottingham Rock City 19.

SVALBARD London Camden Black Heart May 24, Nottingham Soan 25. Support: MØL, Group Of Man.

TECH FEST Line-up: The Acacia Strain, The Contortionist, Cydamen, Amogh Symphony, Vola, DVSR, Jinjer, Tides From Nebula, Voyager, Bloodshot Dawn, Rishabh Seen, The Surrealist, Damned Spring Fragrantia, Chris Schiermann, Siamese, Stomb, Leeched, You Win Again Gravity, SikTh, Protest The Hero, Conjurer, Norma Jean. Newark Showground July 5 – 9.

TIGERS JAW Glasgow Stereo April 11, Newcastle Cluny 13, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 14, Bristol Exchange 15, Southampton Talking Heads 16, Kingston Fighting Cocks 17.

TOUCH DOWN FESTIVAL Line-up: Mallory Knox, Jolan, Homebound, Seek Solace In Ruin, Wolfpeake, Northshore, Winter Band, Dalzell, Ivory Veins. Workington Jane Street July 14.

TOUCHE AMORE Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms July 10, London Dome 11, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 12. Support: Gender Roles.

TREMONTI O2 ABC Glasgow June 28, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 29, O2 Institute Birmingham 30, Belfast Limelight July 2, Dublin Academy 3, Portsmouth Pyramids 5.

TRIVIUM O2 Academy Bristol April 16, O2 Birmingham Academy 17, O2 Academy Glasgow 19, Manchester Academy 20, London O2 Academy Brixton 21. Support: Code Orange, Power Trip, Venom Prison.

TWIN ATLANTIC Newcastle Riverside May 24, Norwich Waterfront 30, Southampton Engine Rooms June 1, Cardiff Tramshed 3. Support: Bellevue Days.

WEDNESDAY 13 Dublin Tivoli August 7, Belfast Limelight 8, Glasgow Garage 9.

WITHIN TEMPTATION O2 Academy Birmingham November 9, O2 Apollo Manchester 10, O2 Academy Glasgow 11, London O2 Academy Brixton 13.

WOES Birmingham Flapper May 2, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 3, Liverpool Sound Basement 5, Norwich Waterfront Studio 6, Newcastle Jumpin Jacks 7, Edinburgh Opium June 21, Inverness Tooth & Claw 22, Dundee Beat Generator 23, Glasgow Garage Attic 24.

THE WONDER YEARS London O2 Academy Islington April 11, Manchester Academy II 13, Glasgow Garage 14, Leeds Stylus 15, Bristol SWX 17, Dublin Button Factory 18, Belfast Empire Music Hall 19. Support: Sorority Noise, AW.

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Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz successfully locates cause of UK's recent shitty weather

BABYMETAL dressing gowns deemed "a little bit creepy" by shop owners

The secret of **Matt Tuck**'s thumb wrestling success? "Practice, practice, practice..."

WORDS: SIMON YOUNG

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